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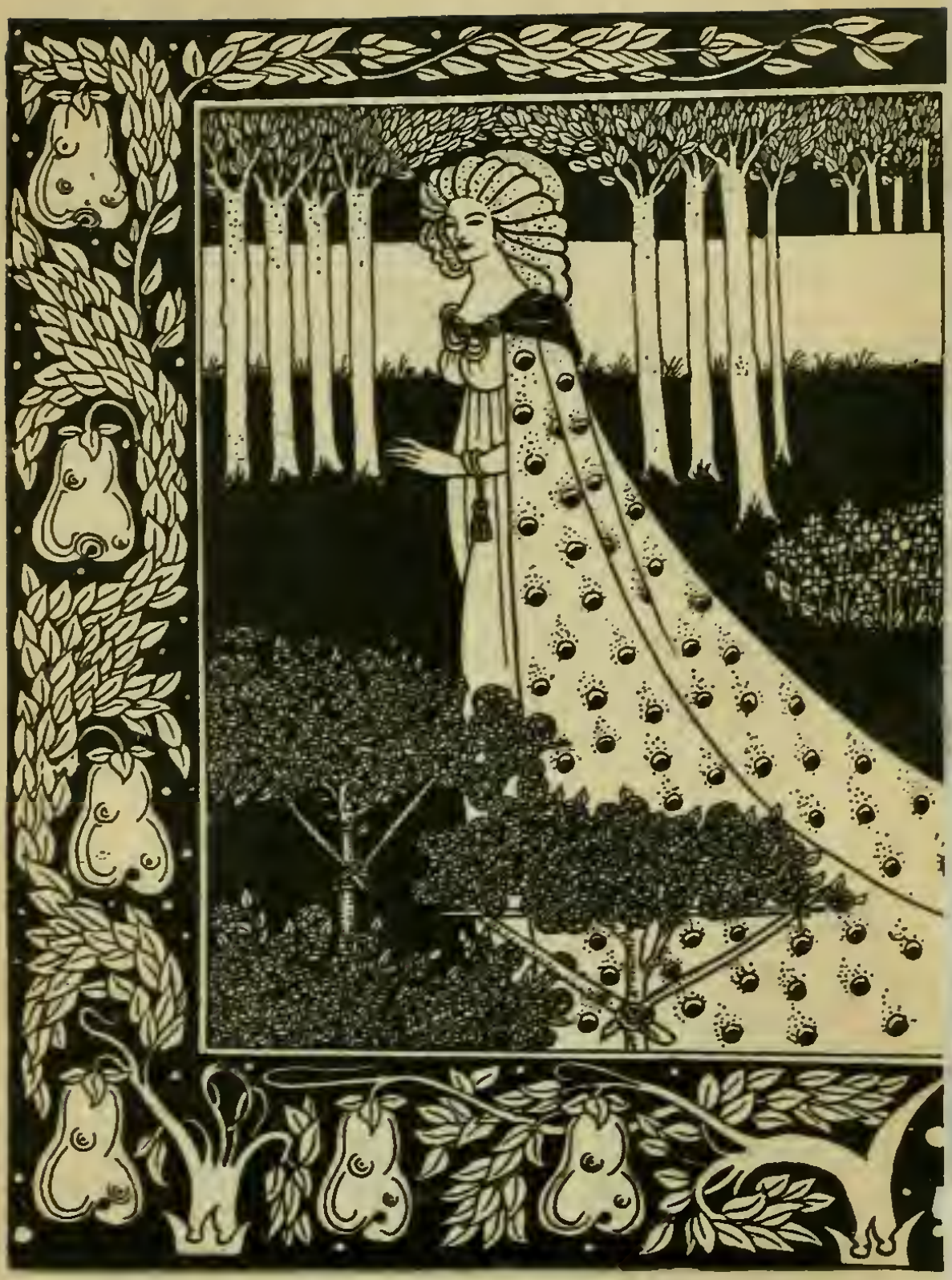

La Beale Isoud at Joyous Gard.

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LE MORTE DARTHUR

BY SIR THOMAS MALORY

PART The Third

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He comes to Camelot

The knight answered: Wit ye well I ask it for love, and not for hate. It may well be so, said Sir Dinadan, but ye proffer me hard love when ye will joust with me with a sharp spear. But, fair knight, said Sir Dinadan, sith ye will joust with me, meet with me in the court of King Arthur, and there shall I joust with you. Well, said the knight, sith ye will not joust with me, I pray you tell me your name. Sir knight, said he, my name is Sir Dinadan. Ah, said the knight, full well know I you for a good knight and a gentle, and wit you well I love you heartily. Then shall there be no jousts, said Dinadan, betwixt us. So they departed. And the same day he came to Camelot, where lay King Arthur. And there he saluted the king and the queen, Sir Launcelot, and Sir Tristram; and all the Court was glad of Sir Dinadan, for he was gentle, wise, and courteous, and a good knight. And in especial, the valiant knight Sir Tristram loved Sir Dinadan passing well above all other knights save Sir Launcelot. Then the king asked Sir Dinadan what adventures he had seen. Sir, said Dinadan, I have seen many adventures, and of some King Mark knoweth, but not all. Then the king hearkened Sir Dinadan, how he told that Sir Palomides and he were afore the castle of Morgan le Fay, and how Sir Lamorak took the jousts afore them, and how he forjousted twelve knights, and of them four he slew, and how after he smote down Sir Palomides and me both. I may not believe that, said the king, for Sir Palomides is a

He relates his adventures

passing good knight. That is very truth, said Sir Dinadan, but yet I saw him better proved, hand for hand. And then he told the king all that battle, and how Sir Palomides was more weaker, and more hurt, and more lost of his blood. And without doubt, said Sir Dinadan had the battle longer lasted, Palomides had been slain. O Jesu, said King Arthur, this is to me a great marvel. Sir, said Tristram, marvel ye nothing thereof, for at mine advice there is not a valianter knight in the world living, for I know his might. And now I will say you, I was never so weary of knight but if it were Sir Launcelot. And there is no knight in the world except Sir Launcelot I would die so well as Sir Lamorak. So God me help, said the king, I would that knight, Sir Lamorak, came to this Court. Sir, said Dinadan, he will be here in short space, and Sir Palomides both, but I fear that Palomides may not yet travel.

CHAPTER XXI. How King Arthur let do cry a jousts, and how Sir Lamorak came in, and overthrew Sir Gawaine and many other. Then within three days after the king let make a jousting at a priory. And there made them ready many knights of the Round Table, for Sir Gawaine and his brethren made them ready to joust; but Tristram, Launcelot, nor Dinadan, would not joust, but suffered Sir Gawaine, for the love of King Arthur, with his brethren, to win the gree if they might. Then on the morn they apparelled them to joust. Sir Gawaine and his four brethren, and

did there great deeds of arms. And Sir Ector de Maris did marvellously well, but Sir Gawaine passed all that fellowship; wherefore King Arthur and all the knights gave Sir Gawaine the honour at the beginning. Right so King Arthur was ware of a knight and two squires, the which came out of a forest side, with a shield covered with leather, and then he came slyly and hurtled here and there, and anon with one spear he had smitten down two knights of the Round Table. Then with his hurtling he lost the covering of his shield, then was the king and all other ware that he bare a red shield. O Jesu, said King Arthur, see where yideth a stout knight, he with the red shield. And there was noise and crying: Beware the knight with the red shield. So within a little while he had overthrown three brethren of Sir Gawaine's. So God me help, said King Arthur, meseemeth yonder is the best jouster that ever I saw. With that he saw him encounter with Sir Gawaine, and he smote him down with so great force that he made his horse to avoid his saddle. How now, said the king, Sir Gawaine hath a fall; well were me an I knew what knight he were with the red shield. I know him well, said Dinadan, but as at this time ye shall not know his name. By my head, said Sir Tristram, he jousted better than Sir Palomides, and if ye list to know his name, wit ye well his name is Sir Lamorak de Galis. As they stood thus talking, Sir Gawaine and he encountered together again, and there he smote Sir Gawaine from his horse, and

The knight with the red shield

He takes the prize

bruised him sore. And in the sight of King Arthur he smote down twenty knights, beside Sir Gawaine and his brethren. And so clearly was the prize given him as a knight peerless. Then slyly and marvellously Sir Lamorak withdrew him from all the fellowship into the forest side. All this espied King Arthur, for his eye went never from him. Then the King, Sir Launcelot, Sir Tristram, and Sir Dinadan, took their hackneys, and rode straight after the good knight, Sir Lamorak de Galis, and there found him. And thus said the king: Ah, fair knight, well ye be found. When he saw the king he put off his helm and saluted him, and when he saw Sir Tristram he alit down off his horse and ran to him to take him by the thighs, but Sir Tristram would not suffer him, but he alit or that he came, and either took other in arms, and made great joy of other. The king was glad, and also was all the fellowship of the Round Table, except Sir Gawaine and his brethren. And when they wist that he was Sir Lamorak, they had great despite at him, and were wonderly wrath with him that he had put them to dishonour that day. Then Gawaine called privily in council all his brethren, and to them said thus: Fair brethren, here may ye see, whom that we hate King Arthur loveth, and whom that we love he hateth. And wit ye well, my fair brethren, that this Sir Lamorak will never love us, because we slew his father, King Pellinore, for we deemed that he slew our father, King of Orkney. And for the despite of Pellinore, Sir Lamorak did us a

shame to our mother, therefore I will be revenged. Sir, said Sir Gawaine's brethren, let see how ye will or may be revenged, and ye shall find us ready. Well, said Gawaine, hold you still and we shall espy our time.

Tristram and King Mark reconciled

CHAPTER XXII. How King Arthur made King Mark to be accorded with Sir Tristram, and how they departed toward Cornwall. Now pass we our matter, and leave we Sir Gawaine, and speak of King Arthur, that on a day said unto King Mark: Sir, I pray you give me a gift that I shall ask you. Sir, said King Mark, I will give you whatsomever ye desire an it be in my power. Sir, gramercy, said Arthur. This I will ask you, that ye will be good lord unto Sir Tristram, for he is a man of great honour; and that ye will take him with you into Cornwall, and let him see his friends, and there cherish him for my sake. Sir, said King Mark, I promise you by the faith of my body, and by the faith that I owe to God and to you, I shall worship him for your sake in all that I can or may. Sir, said Arthur, and I will forgive you all the evil will that ever I ought you, an so be that you swear that upon a book before me. With a good will, said King Mark; and so he there sware upon a book afore him and all his knights, and therewith King Mark and Sir Tristram took either other by the hands hard knit together. But for all this King Mark thought falsely, as it proved after, for he put Sir Tristram in prison, and cowardly would have slain him. Then

King Mark's promise

soon after King Mark took his leave to ride into Cornwall, and Sir Tristram made him ready to ride with him, whereof the most part of the Round Table were wroth and heavy, and in especial Sir Launcelot, and Sir Lamorak, and Sir Dinadan, were wroth out of measure. For well they wist King Mark would slay or destroy Sir Tristram. Alas, said Dinadan, that my lord, Sir Tristram, shall depart. And Sir Tristram took such sorrow that he was amazed like a fool. Alas, said Sir Launcelot unto King Arthur, what have ye done, for ye shall lose the most man of worship that ever came into your court. It was his own desire, said Arthur, and therefore I might not do withal, for I have done all that I can and made them at accord. Accord, said Sir Launcelot, fie upon that accord, for ye shall hear that he shall slay Sir Tristram, or put him in a prison, for he is the most coward and the villainest king and knight that is now living. And therewith Sir Launcelot departed, and came to King Mark, and said to him thus: Sir king, wit thou well the good knight Sir Tristram shall go with thee. Beware, I rede thee, of treason, for an thou mischief that knight by any manner of falsehood or treason, by the faith I owe to God and to the order of knighthood, I shall slay thee with mine own hands. Sir Launcelot, said the king, overmuch have ye said to me, and I have sworn and said over largely afore King Arthur in hearing of all his knights, that I shall not slay nor betray him. It were to me overmuch shame to break my promise. Ye say well, said

Sir Launcelot, but ye are called so false and full of treason that no man may believe you. Forsooth it is known well wherefore ye came into this country, and for none other cause but for to slay Sir Tristram. So with great dole King Mark and Sir Tristram rode together, for it was by Sir Tristram's will and his means to go with King Mark, and all was for the intent to see La Beale Isoud, for without the sight of her Sir Tristram might not endure.

Tristram departs with King Mark

CHAPTER XXIII. How Sir Percivale was made knight of King Arthur, and how a dumb maid spake, and brought him to the Round Table. Now turn we again unto Sir Lamorak, and speak we of his brethren, Sir Tor, which was King Pellinore's first son and begotten of Aryes, wife of the cowherd, for he was a bastard; and Sir Aglovale was his first son begotten in wedlock; Sir Lamorak, Dornar, Percivale, these were his sons too in wedlock. So when King Mark and Sir Tristram were departed from the court there was made great dole and sorrow for the departing of Sir Tristram. Then the king and his knights made no manner of joys eight days after. And at the eight days' end there came to the court a knight with a young squire with him. And when this knight was unarmed, he went to the king and required him to make the young squire a knight. Of what lineage is he come? said King Arthur. Sir, said the knight, he is the son of King Pellinore, that did you some time good service, and he is a brother unto Sir

Sir Percivale de Galis

Lamorak de Galis, the good knight. Well, said the king, for what cause desire ye that of me that I should make him knight? Wit you well, my lord the king, that this young squire is brother to me as well as to Sir Lamorak, and my name is Aglavale. Sir Aglavale, said Arthur, for the love of Sir Lamorak, and for his father's love, he shall be made knight tomorrow. Now tell me, said Arthur, what is his name? Sir, said the knight, his name is Percivale de Galis. So on the morn the king made him knight in Camelot. But the king and all the knights thought it would be long or that he proved a good knight. Then at the dinner, when the king was set at the table, and every knight after he was of prowess, the king commanded him to be set among mean knights; and so was Sir Percivale set as the king commanded. Then was there a maiden in the Queen's court that was come of high blood, and she was dumb and never spake word. Right so she came straight into the hall, and went unto Sir Percivale, and took him by the hand and said aloud, that the king and all the knights might hear it: Arise, Sir Percivale, the noble knight and God's knight, and go with me; and so he did. And there she brought him to the right side of the Siege Perilous, and said, Fair knight, take here thy siege, for that siege appertaineth to thee and to none other. Right so she departed and asked a priest. And as she was confessed and houselled then she died. Then the king and all the court made great joy of Sir Percivale.

CHAPTER XXIV. How Sir Lamorak visited King Lot's wife, and how Sir Gaheris slew her which was his own mother

Gaheris slays his mother

Now turn we unto Sir Lamorak, that much was there praised. Then, by the mean of Sir Gawaine and his brethren, they sent for their mother there besides, fast by a castle beside Camelot; and all was to that intent to slay Sir Lamorak. The Queen of Orkney was there but a while, but Sir Lamorak wist of their being, and was full fain; and for to make an end of this matter, he sent unto her, and there betwixt them was a night assigned that Sir Lamorak should come to her. Thereof was ware Sir Gaheris, and there he rode afore the same night, and waited upon Sir Lamorak, and then he saw where he came all armed. And where Sir Lamorak alit he tied his horse to a privy postern, and so he went into a parlour and unarmed him; and then he went unto the queen's bed, and she made of him passing great joy, and he of her again, for either loved other passing sore. So when the knight, Sir Gaheris, saw his time, he came to their bedside all armed, with his sword naked, and suddenly gat his mother by the hair and struck off her head. When Sir Lamorak saw the blood dash upon him all hot, the which he loved passing well, wit you well he was sore abashed and dismayed of that dolorous knight. And therewithal, Sir Lamorak leapt out of the bed in his shirt as a knight dismayed, saying thus: Ah, Sir Gaheris, knight of the Table Round, foul and evil have ye done, and to you great shame. Alas, why have ye slain your

Gaheris and Lamorak

mother that bare you? with more right ye should have slain me. The offence hast thou done, said Gaheris, notwithstanding a man is born to offer his service; but yet shouldst thou beware with whom thou meddlest, for thou hast put me and my brethren to a shame, and thy father slew our father; and thou to lie by our mother is too much shame for us to suffer. And as for thy father, King Pellinore, my brother Sir Gawaine and I slew him. Ye did him the more wrong, said Sir Lamorak, for my father slew not your father, it was Balin le Savage: and as yet my father's death is not revenged. Leave those words, said Sir Gaheris, for an thou speak feloniously I will slay thee. But because thou art naked I am ashamed to slay thee. But wit thou well, in what place I may get thee I shall slay thee; and now my mother is quit of thee; and withdraw thee and take thine armour, that thou were gone. Sir Lamorak saw there was none other bote, but fast armed him, and took his horse and rode his way making great sorrow. But for the shame and dolour he would not ride to King Arthur's court, but rode another way. But when it was known that Gaheris had slain his mother the king was passing wroth, and commanded him to go out of his court. Wit ye well Sir Gawaine was wroth that Gaheris had slain his mother and let Sir Lamorak escape. And for this matter was the king passing wroth, and so was Sir Lamorak, and many other knights. Sir, said Sir Launcelot, here is a great mischief befallen by felony, and by fore-

cast treason, that your sister is thus shamefully slain. And I dare say that it was wrought by treason; and I dare say ye shall lose that good knight, Sir Lamorak, the which is great pity. I wot well and am sure, an Sir Tristram wist it, he would never more come within your court, the which should grieve you much more and all your knights. God defend, said the noble King Arthur, that I should lose Sir Lamorak or Sir Tristram, for then twain of my chief knights of the Table Round were gone. Sir, said Sir Launcelot, I am sure ye shall lose Sir Lamorak, for Sir Gawaine and his brethren will slay him by one mean or other; for they among them have concluded and sworn to slay him an ever they may see their time. That shall I let, said Arthur.

Arthur wroth with Gaheris

CHAPTER XXV. How Sir Agravaine and Sir Mordred met with a knight fleeing, and how they both were overthrown, and of Sir Dinadan. Now leave we of Sir Lamorak, and speak of Sir Gawaine's brethren, and specially of Sir Agravaine and Sir Mordred. As they rode on their adventures they met with a knight fleeing, sore wounded; and they asked him what tidings. Fair knights, said he, here cometh a knight after me that will slay me. With that came Sir Dinadan riding to them by adventure, but he would promise them no help. But Sir Agravaine and Sir Mordred promised him to rescue him. Therewithal came that knight straight unto them, and anon he proffered to joust. That saw

Sir Dinadan overthrows Sir Breuse

Sir Mordred and rode to him, but he struck Mordred over his horse's tail. That saw Sir Agravaine, and straight he rode toward that knight, and right so as he served Mordred so he served Agravaine, and said to them: Sirs, wit ye well both that I am Breuse Saunce Pité, that hath done this to you. And yet he rode over Agravaine five or six times. When Dinadan saw this, he must needs joust with him for shame. And so Dinadan and he encountered together, that with pure strength Sir Dinadan smote him over his horse's tail. Then he took his horse and fled, for he was on foot one of the valiantest knights in Arthur's days, and a great destroyer of all good knights. Then rode Sir Dinadan unto Sir Mordred and unto Sir Agravaine. Sir knight, said they all, well have ye done, and well have ye revenged us, wherefore we pray you tell us your name. Fair sirs, ye ought to know my name, the which is called Sir Dinadan. When they understood that it was Dinadan they were more wroth than they were before, for they hated him out of measure because of Sir Lamorak. For Dinadan had such a custom that he loved all good knights that were valiant, and he hated all those that were destroyers of good knights. And there were none that hated Dinadan but those that ever were called murderers. Then spake the hurt knight that Breuse Saunce Pité had chased, his name was Dalan, and said: If thou be Dinadan thou slewest my father. It may well be so, said Dinadan, but then it was in my defence and

at his request. By my head, said Dalan, thou shalt die therefore, and therewith he dressed his spear and his shield. And to make the shorter tale, Sir Dinadan smote him down off his horse, that his neck was nigh broken. And in the same wise he smote Sir Mordred and Sir Agravaine. And after, in the quest of the Sangreal, cowardly and feloniously they slew Dinadan, the which was great damage, for he was a great bourder and a passing good knight. And so Sir Dinadan rode to a castle that hight Beale-Valet. And there he found Sir Palomides that was not yet whole of the wound that Sir Lamorak gave him. And there Dinadan told Palomides all the tidings that he heard and saw of Sir Tristram, and how he was gone with King Mark, and with him he hath all his will and desire. Therewith Sir Palomides waxed wroth, for he loved La Beale Isoud. And then he wist well that Sir Tristram enjoyed her.

and three other knights

CHAPTER XXVI. How King Arthur, the Queen, and Launcelot received letters out of Cornwall, and of the answer again. Now leave we Sir Palomides and Sir Dinadan in the Castle of Beale Valet, and turn we again unto King Arthur. There came a knight out of Cornwall, his name was Fergus, a fellow of the Round Table. And there he told the King and Sir Launcelot good tidings of Sir Tristram, and there were brought goodly letters, and how he left him in the castle of Tintagil. Then came the damosel that brought goodly

Letters from Cornwall

letters unto King Arthur and unto Sir Launcelot, and there she had passing good cheer of the King, and of the Queen Guenever, and of Sir Launcelot. Then they wrote goodly letters again. But Sir Launcelot bade ever Sir Tristram beware of King Mark, for ever he called him in his letters King Fox, as who saith, he fareth all with wiles and treason. Whereof Sir Tristram in his heart thanked Sir Launcelot. Then the damosel went unto La Beale Isoud, and bare her letters from the King and from Sir Launcelot, whereof she was in passing great joy. Fair damosel, said La Beale Isoud, how fareth my Lord Arthur, and the Queen Guenever, and the noble knight, Sir Launcelot? She answered, and to make short tale: Much the better that ye and Sir Tristram be in joy. God reward them, said La Beale Isoud, for Sir Tristram suffereth great pain for me, and I for him. So the damosel departed, and brought letters to King Mark. And when he had read them, and understood them, he was wroth with Sir Tristram, for he deemed that he had sent the damosel unto King Arthur. For Arthur and Launcelot in a manner threated King Mark. And as King Mark read these letters he deemed treason by Sir Tristram. Damosel, said King Mark, will ye ride again and bear letters from me unto King Arthur? Sir, she said, I will be at your commandment to ride when ye will. Ye say well, said the king; come again, said the king, to-morn, and fetch your letters. Then she departed and told

them how she should ride again with letters unto Arthur. Then we pray you, said La Beale Isoud and Sir Tristram, that when ye have received your letters, that ye would come by us that we may see the privity of your letters. All that I may do, madam, ye wot well I must do for Sir Tristram, for I have been long his own maiden. So on the morn the damosel went to King Mark to have had his letters and to depart. I am not avised, said King Mark, as at this time to send my letters. Then privily and secretly he sent letters unto King Arthur, and unto Queen Guenever, and unto Sir Launcelot. So the varlet departed, and found the King and the Queen in Wales, at Carlion. And as the King and the Queen were at mass the varlet came with the letters. And when mass was done the King and the Queen opened the letters privily by themself. And the beginning of the king's letters spake wonderly short unto King Arthur, and bade him intermeddle with himself and with his wife, and of his knights; for he was able enough to rule and keep his wife.

King Mark's letters

CHAPTER XXVII. How Sir Launcelot was wroth with the letter that he received from King Mark, and of Dinadan which made a lay of King Mark. When King Arthur understood the letter, he mused of many things, and thought on his sister's words, Queen Morgan le Fay, that she had said betwixt Queen Guenever and Sir Launcelot. And in this thought he studied a great while.

Dinadan's counsel

Then he bethought him again how his sister was his own enemy, and that she hated the Queen and Sir Launcelot, and so he put all that out of his thought. Then King Arthur read the letter again, and the latter clause said that King Mark took Sir Tristram for his mortal enemy; wherefore he put Arthur out of doubt he would be revenged of Sir Tristram. Then was King Arthur wroth with King Mark. And when Queen Guenever read her letter and understood it, she was wroth out of measure, for the letter spake shame by her and by Sir Launcelot. And so privily she sent the letter unto Sir Launcelot. And when he wist the intent of the letter he was so wroth that he laid him down on his bed to sleep, whereof Sir Dinadan was ware, for it was his manner to be privy with all good knights. And as Sir Launcelot slept he stole the letter out of his hand, and read it word by word. And then he made great sorrow for anger. And so Sir Launcelot awaked, and went to a window, and read the letter again, the which made him angry. Sir, said Dinadan, wherefore be ye angry? discover your heart to me: for sooth ye wot well I owe you good will, howbeit I am a poor knight and a servitor unto you and to all good knights. For though I be not of worship myself I love all those that be of worship. It is truth, said Sir Launcelot, ye are a trusty knight, and for great trust I will shew you my counsel. And when Dinadan understood all, he said: This is my counsel: set you right nought by these threats, for King

Mark is so villainous, that by fair speech shall never man get of him. But ye shall see what I shall do; I will make a lay for him, and when it is made I shall make an harper to sing it afore him. So anon he went and made it, and taught it an harper that hight Eliot. And when he could it he taught it to many harpers. And so by the will of Sir Launcelot, and of Arthur, the harpers went straight into Wales, and into Cornwall, to sing the lay that Sir Dinadan made by King Mark, the which was the worst lay that ever harper sang with harp or with any other instruments.

The lay of King Mark

CHAPTER XXVIII. How Sir Tristram was hurt, and of a war made to King Mark; and of Sir Tristram how he promised to rescue him. Now turn we again unto Sir Tristram and to King Mark. As Sir Tristram was at jousts and at tournament it fortuned he was sore hurt both with a spear and with a sword, but yet he won always the degree. And for to repose him he went to a good knight that dwelled in Cornwall, in a castle, whose name was Sir Dinas le Seneschal. Then by misfortune there came out of Sessoin a great number of men of arms, and an hideous host, and they entered nigh the Castle of Tintagil; and their captain's name was Elias, a good man of arms. When King Mark understood his enemies were entered into his land he made great dole and sorrow, for in no wise by his will King Mark would not send for Sir Tristram, for he hated him deadly. So when his

War made upon King Mark

council was come they devised and cast many perils of the strength of their enemies. And then they concluded all at once, and said thus unto King Mark: Sir, wit ye well ye must send for Sir Tristram, the good knight, or else they will never be overcome. For by Sir Tristram they must be foughten withal, or else we row against the stream. Well, said King Mark, I will do by your counsel; but yet he was full loath thereto, but need constrained him to send for him. Then was he sent for in all haste that might be, that he should come to King Mark. And when he understood that King Mark had sent for him, he mounted upon a soft ambler and rode to King Mark. And when he was come the King said thus: Fair nephew, Sir Tristram, this is all. Here be come our enemies of Sessoin, that are here nigh hand, and without tarrying they must be met with shortly, or else they will destroy this country. Sir, said Sir Tristram, wit ye well all my power is at your commandment. And wit ye well, sir, these eight days I may bear none arms, for my wounds be not yet whole. And by that day I shall do what I may. Ye say well, said King Mark; then go ye again and repose you and make you fresh, and I shall go and meet the Sessoins with all my power. So the King departed unto Tintagil, and Sir Tristram went to repose him. And the King made a great host, and departed them in three; the first part led Sir Dinas the Seneschal, and Sir Andred led the second part, and Sir Argius led the third part; and he was of the blood of

King Mark. And the Sessoins had three great battles, and many good men of arms. And so King Mark by the advice of his knights issued out of the Castle of Tintagil upon his enemies. And Dinas, the good knight, rode out afore, and slew two knights with his own hands, and then began the battles. And there was marvellous breaking of spears and smiting of swords, and slew down many good knights. And ever was Sir Dinas the Seneschal the best of King Mark's party. And thus the battle endured long with great mortality. But at the last King Mark and Sir Dinas, were they never so loath, they withdrew them to the castle of Tintagil with great slaughter of people; and the Sessoins followed on fast, that ten of them were put within the gates and four slain with the portcullis. Then King Mark sent for Sir Tristram by a varlet, that told him all the mortality. Then he sent the varlet again, and bade him: Tell King Mark that I will come as soon as I am whole, for erst I may do him no good. Then King Mark had his answer. Therewith came Elias and bade the king yield up the castle: For ye may not hold it no while. Sir Elias, said the king, so will I yield up the castle if I be not soon rescued. Anon King Mark sent again for rescue to Sir Tristram. By then Sir Tristram was whole, and he had gotten him ten good knights of Arthur's; and with them he rode unto Tintagil. And when he saw the great host of Sessoins he marvelled wonder greatly. And then Sir Tristram rode by the woods and by the ditches as secretly as he

Sir Tristram sent for

He comes to Tintagil

might, till he came nigh the gates. And there dressed a knight to him when he saw that Sir Tristram would enter; and Sir Tristram smote him down dead, and so he served three more. And every each of these ten knights slew a man of arms. So Sir Tristram entered into the Castle of Tintagil. And when King Mark wist that Sir Tristram was come he was glad of his coming, and so was all the fellowship, and of him they made great joy.

CHAPTER XXIX. How Sir Tristram overcame the battle, and how Elias desired a man to fight body for body. So on the morn Elias the captain came, and bade King Mark: Come out and do battle; for now the good knight Sir Tristram is entered it will be shame to thee, said Elias, for to keep thy walls. When King Mark understood this he was wroth and said no word, but went unto Sir Tristram and asked him his counsel. Sir, said Sir Tristram, will ye that I give him his answer? I will well, said King Mark. Then Sir Tristram said thus to the messenger: Bear thy lord word from the king and me, that we will do battle with him to-morn in the plain field. What is your name? said the messenger. Wit thou well my name is Sir Tristram de Liones. Therewithal the messenger departed and told his lord Elias all that he had heard. Sir, said Sir Tristram unto King Mark, I pray you give me leave to have the rule of the battle. I pray you take the rule, said King Mark. Then Sir Tristram let devise the battle in what

and takes the rule of the battle

manner that it should be. He let depart his host in six parties, and ordained Sir Dinas the Seneschal to have the foreward, and other knights to rule the remnant. And the same night Sir Tristram burnt all the Sessoins' ships unto the cold water. Anon, as Elias wist that, he said it was of Sir Tristram's doing: For he casteth that we shall never escape, mother son of us. Therefore, fair fellows, fight freely to-morrow, and miscomfort you nought; for any knight, though he be the best knight in the world, he may not have ado with us all. Then they ordained their battle in four parties, wonderly well apparelled and garnished with men of arms. Thus they within issued, and they without set freely upon them; and there Sir Dinas did great deeds of arms. Not for then Sir Dinas and his fellowship were put to the worse. With that came Sir Tristram and slew two knights with one spear; then he slew on the right hand and on the left hand, that men marvelled that ever he might do such deeds of arms. And then he might see sometime the battle was driven a bow-draught from the castle, and sometime it was at the gates of the castle. Then came Elias the captain rushing here and there, and hit King Mark so sore upon the helm that he made him to avoid the saddle. And then Sir Dinas gat King Mark again to horseback. Therewithal came in Sir Tristram like a lion, and there he met with Elias, and he smote him so sore upon the helm that he avoided his saddle. And thus they fought till it was night, and for great slaughter

The fortunes of the fight

and for wounded people every each party drew to their rest. And when King Mark was come within the Castle of Tintagil he lacked of his knights an hundred, and they without lacked two hundred; and they searched the wounded men on both parties. And then they went to council; and wit you well either party were loath to fight more, so that either might escape with their worship. When Elias the captain understood the death of his men he made great dole; and when he wist that they were loath to go to battle again he was wroth out of measure. Then Elias sent word unto King Mark, in great despite, whether he would find a knight that would fight for him body for body. And if that he might slay King Mark's knight, he to have the truage of Cornwall yearly. And if that his knight slay mine, I fully release my claim forever. Then the messenger departed unto King Mark, and told him how that his lord Elias had sent him word to find a knight to do battle with him body for body. When King Mark understood the messenger, he bade him abide and he should have his answer. Then called he all the baronage together to wit what was the best counsel. They said all at once: To fight in a field we have no lust, for had not been Sir Tristram's prowess it had been likely that we never should have escaped; and therefore, sir, as we deem, it were well done to find a knight that would do battle with him, for he knightly proffereth.

CHAPTER XXX. How Sir Elias and Sir Tristram fought together for the truage, and how Sir Tristram slew Elias in the field. Not for then when all this was said, they could find no knight that would do battle with him. Sir king, said they all, here is no knight that dare fight with Elias. Alas, said King Mark, then am I utterly ashamed and utterly destroyed, unless that my nephew Sir Tristram will take the battle upon him. Wit you well, they said all, he had yesterday overmuch on hand, and he is weary for travail, and sore wounded. Where is he? said King Mark. Sir, said they, he is in his bed to repose him. Alas, said King Mark, but I have the succour of my nephew Sir Tristram, I am utterly destroyed for ever. Therewith one went to Sir Tristram where he lay, and told him what King Mark had said. And therewith Sir Tristram arose lightly, and put on him a long gown, and came afore the King and all the lords. And when he saw them all so dismayed he asked the King and the lords what tidings were with them. Never worse, said the King. And therewith he told him all, how he had word of Elias to find a knight to fight for the truage of Cornwall, and none can I find. And as for you, said the king and all the lords, we may ask no more of you for shame; for through your hardiness yesterday ye saved all our lives. Sir, said Sir Tristram, now I understand ye would have my succour, reason would that I should do all that lieth in my power to do, saving my worship

Elias sends a challenge

Tristram accepts it

and my life, howbeit I am sore bruised and hurt. And sithen Sir Elias proffereth so largely, I shall fight with him, or else I will be slain in the field, or else I will deliver Cornwall from the old truage. And therefore lightly call his messenger and he shall be answered, for as yet my wounds be green, and they will be sorer a seven night after than they be now; and therefore he shall have his answer that I will do battle to-morn with him. Then was the messenger departed brought before King Mark. Hark, my fellow, said Sir Tristram, go fast unto thy lord, and bid him make true assurance on his part for the truage, as the king here shall make on his part; and then tell thy lord, Sir Elias, that I, Sir Tristram, King Arthur's knight, and knight of the Table Round, will as to-morn meet with thy lord on horseback, to do battle as long as my horse may endure, and after that to do battle with him on foot to the utterance. The messenger beheld Sir Tristram from the top to the toe; and therewithal he departed and came to his lord, and told him how he was answered of Sir Tristram. And therewithal was made hostage on both parties, and made it as sure as it might be, that whether party had the victory, so to end. And then were both hosts assembled on both parts of the field, without the Castle of Tintagil, and there was none but Sir Tristram and Sir Elias armed. So when the appointment was made, they departed in-sunder, and they came together with all the might that their horses might run.

And either knight smote other so hard that both horses and knights went to the earth. Not for then they both lightly arose and dressed their shields on their shoulders, with naked swords in their hands, and they dashed together that it seemed a flaming fire about them. Thus they traced, and traversed, and hewed on helms and hauberks, and cut away many cantels of their shields, and either wounded other passing sore, so that the hot blood fell freshly upon the earth. And by when they had foughten the mountenance of an hour Sir Tristram waxed faint and for-bled, and gave sore aback. That saw Sir Elias, and followed fiercely upon him, and wounded him in many places. And ever Sir Tristram traced and traversed, and went froward him here and there, and covered him with his shield as he might all weakly, that all men said he was overcome; for Sir Elias had given him twenty strokes against one. Then was there laughing of the Sessoins' party, and great dole on King Mark's party. Alas, said the King, we are ashamed and destroyed all for ever: for as the book saith, Sir Tristram was never so matched, but if it were Sir Launcelot. Thus as they stood and beheld both parties, that one party laughing and the other party weeping, Sir Tristram remembered him of his lady, La Beale Isoud, that looked upon him, and how he was likely never to come in her presence. Then he pulled up his shield that erst hung full low. And then he dressed up his shield unto Elias, and gave him many sad strokes, twenty against one, and

The encounter

Tristram wins the battle

all to-brake his shield and his hauberk, that the hot blood ran down to the earth. Then began King Mark to laugh, and all Cornish men, and that other party to weep. And ever Sir Tristram said to Sir Elias: Yield thee. Then when Sir Tristram saw him so staggering on the ground, he said: Sir Elias, I am right sorry for thee, for thou art a passing good knight as ever I met withal, except Sir Launcelot. Therewithal Sir Elias fell to the earth, and there died. What shall I do, said Sir Tristram unto King Mark, for this battle is at an end? Then they of Elias' party departed, and King Mark took of them many prisoners, to redress the harms and the scathes that he had of them; and the remnant he sent into their country to borrowe out their fellows. Then was Sir Tristram searched and well healed. Yet for all this King Mark would fain have slain Sir Tristram. But for all that ever Sir Tristram saw or heard by King Mark, yet would he never beware of his treason, but ever he would be thereas La Beale Isoud was.

CHAPTER XXXI. How at a great feast that King Mark made an harper came and sang the lay that Dinadan had made. Now will we pass of this matter, and speak we of the harpers that Sir Launcelot and Sir Dinadan had sent into Cornwall. And at the great feast that King Mark made for joy that the Sessoins were put out of his country, then came Eliot the harper with the lay that Dinadan had made, and secretly brought it unto Sir Tristram, and

The lay made by Dinadan

told him the lay that Dinadan had made by King Mark. And when Sir Tristram heard it, he said: O Lord Jesu, that Dinadan can make wonderly well and ill, thereas it shall be. Sir, said Eliot, dare I sing this song afore King Mark? Yea, on my peril, said Sir Tristram, for I shall be thy warrant. Then at the meat came in Eliot the harper, and because he was a curious harper men heard him sing the same lay that Dinadan had made, the which spake the most villainy by King Mark of his treason that ever man heard. When the harper had sung his song to the end King Mark was wonderly wroth, and said: Thou harper, how durst thou be so bold on thy head to sing this song afore me. Sir, said Eliot, wit you well I am a minstrel, and I must do as I am commanded of these lords that I bear the arms of. And sir, wit ye well that Sir Dinadan, a knight of the Table Round, made this song, and made me to sing it afore you. Thou sayest well, said King Mark, and because thou art a minstrel thou shalt go quit, but I charge thee hie thee fast out of my sight. So the harper departed and went to Sir Tristram, and told him how he had sped. Then Sir Tristram let make letters as goodly as he could to Launcelot and to Sir Dinadan. And so he let conduct the harper out of the country. But to say that King Mark was wonderly wroth, he was, for he deemed that the lay that was sung afore him was made by Sir Tristram's counsel, wherefore he thought to slay him and all his well-willers in that country.

The good Prince Boudwin

CHAPTER XXXII. How King Mark slew by treason his brother Boudwin, for good service that he had done to him. Now turn we to another matter that fell between King Mark and his brother, that was called the good Prince Boudwin, that all the people of the country loved passing well. So it befell on a time that the miscreant Saracens landed in the country of Cornwall soon after these Sessoins were gone. And then the good Prince Boudwin, at the landing, he raised the country privily and hastily. And or it were day he let put wildfire in three of his own ships, and suddenly he pulled up the sail, and with the wind he made those ships to be driven among the navy of the Saracens. And to make short tale, those three ships set on fire all the ships, that none were saved. And at point of the day the good Prince Boudwin with all his fellowship set on the miscreants with shouts and cries, and slew to the number of forty thousand, and left none a-live. When King Mark wist this he was wonderly wroth that his brother should win such worship. And because this prince was better beloved than he in all that country, and that also Boudwin loved well Sir Tristram, therefore he thought to slay him. And thus, hastily, as a man out of his wit, he sent for Prince Boudwin and Anglides his wife, and bade them bring their young son with them, that he might see him. All this he did to the intent to slay the child as well as his father, for he was the falsest traitor that ever was born. Alas, for his goodness and for his good

King Mark slays his brother

deeds this gentle Prince Boudwin was slain. So when he came with his wife Anglides, the King made them fair semblaunt till they had dined. And when they had dined King Mark sent for his brother and said thus: Brother, how sped you when the miscreants arrived by you? meseemeth it had been your part to have sent me word, that I might have been at that journey, for it had been reason that I had had the honour and not you. Sir, said the Prince Boudwin, it was so that an I had tarried till that I had sent for you those miscreants had destroyed my country. Thou liest, false traitor, said King Mark, for thou art ever about for to win worship from me, and put me to dishonour, and thou cherishest that I hate. And therewith he struck him to the heart with a dagger, that he never after spake word. Then the Lady Anglides made great dole, and swooned, for she saw her lord slain afore her face. Then was there no more to do but Prince Boudwin was despoiled and brought to burial. But Anglides privily gat her husband's doublet and his shirt, and that she kept secretly. Then was there much sorrow and crying, and great dole made Sir Tristram, Sir Dinas, Sir Fergus, and so did all knights that were there; for that prince was passingly well beloved. So La Beale Isoud sent unto Anglides, the Prince Boudwin's wife, and bade her avoid lightly or else her young son, Alisander le Orphelin, should be slain. When she heard this, she took her horse and her child, and rode with such poor men as durst ride with her.

Anglides escapes with her son

CHAPTER XXXIII. How Anglides, Boudwin's wife, escaped with her young son, Alisander le Orphelin, and came to the Castle of Arundel. Notwithstanding, when King Mark had done this deed, yet he thought to do more vengeance; and with his sword in his hand, he sought from chamber to chamber, to seek Anglides and her young son. And when she was missed he called a good knight that hight Sadok, and charged him by pain of death to fetch Anglides again and her young son. So Sir Sadok departed and rode after Anglides. And within ten mile he overtook her, and bade her turn again and ride with him to King Mark. Alas, fair knight, she said, what shall ye win by my son's death or by mine? I have had overmuch harm and too great a loss. Madam, said Sadok, of your loss is dole and pity; but madam, said Sadok, would ye depart out of this country with your son, and keep him till he be of age, that he may revenge his father's death, then would I suffer you to depart from me, so you promise me to revenge the death of Prince Boudwin. Ah, gentle knight, Jesu thank thee, and if ever my son, Alisander le Orphelin, live to be a knight, he shall have his father's doublet and his shirt with the bloody marks, and I shall give him such a charge that he shall remember it while he liveth. And therewithal Sadok departed from her, and either betook other to God. And when Sadok came to King Mark he told him faithfully that he had drowned young Alisander her son; and thereof King Mark was full glad.

Now turn we unto Anglides, that rode both night and day by adventure out of Cornwall, and little and in few places she rested; but ever she drew southward to the seaside, till by fortune she came to a castle that is called Magouns, and now it is called Arundel, in Sussex. And the Constable of the castle welcomed her, and said she was welcome to her own castle; and there was Anglides worshipfully received, for the Constable's wife was nigh her cousin, and the Constable's name was Bellangere; and that same Constable told Anglides that the same castle was hers by right inheritance. Thus Anglides endured years and winters, till Alisander was big and strong; there was none so wight in all that country, neither there was none that might do no manner of mastery afore him.

and reaches Arundel Castle

CHAPTER XXXIV. How Anglides gave the bloody doublet to Alisander, her son, the same day that he was made knight, and the charge withal. Then upon a day Bellangere the Constable came to Anglides and said: Madam, it were time my lord Alisander were made knight, for he is a passing strong young man. Sir, said she, I would he were made knight; but then must I give him the most charge that ever sinful mother gave to her child. Do as ye list, said Bellangere, and I shall give him warning that he shall be made knight. Now it will be well done that he may be made knight at our Lady Day in Lent. Be it so, said Anglides, and I pray you make

Alisander made knight

ready therefore. So came the Constable to Alisander, and told him that he should at our Lady Day in Lent be made knight. I thank God, said Alisander; these are the best tidings that ever came to me. Then the Constable ordained twenty of the greatest gentlemen's sons, and the best born men of the country, that should be made knights that same day that Alisander was made knight. So on the same day that Alisander and his twenty fellows were made knights, at the offering of the mass there came Anglides unto her son and said thus: O fair sweet son, I charge thee upon my blessing, and of the high order of chivalry that thou takest here this day, that thou understand what I shall say and charge thee withal. Therewithal she pulled out a bloody doublet and a bloody shirt, that were be-bled with old blood. When Alisander saw this he stert aback and waxed pale, and said: Fair mother, what may this mean? I shall tell thee, fair son: this was thine own father's doublet and shirt, that he wore upon him that same day that he was slain. And there she told him why and wherefore, and how for his goodness King Mark slew him with his dagger afore mine own eyen. And therefore this shall be your charge that I shall give thee.

CHAPTER XXXV. How it was told to King Mark of Sir Alisander, and how he would have slain Sir Sadok for saving his life. Now I require thee, and charge thee upon my blessing, and upon the high order of

knighthood, that thou be revenged upon King Mark for the death of thy father. And therewithal she swooned. Then Alisander leapt to his mother, and took her up in his arms, and said: Fair mother, ye have given me a great charge, and here I promise you I shall be avenged upon King Mark when that I may; and that I promise to God and to you. So this feast was ended, and the Constable, by the advice of Anglides, let purvey that Alisander was well horsed and harnessed. Then he jousted with his twenty fellows that were made knights with him, but for to make a short tale, he overthrew all those twenty, that none might withstand him a buffet. Then one of those knights departed unto King Mark, and told him all, how Alisander was made knight, and all the charge that his mother gave him, as ye have heard afore time. Alas, false treason, said King Mark, I weened that young traitor had been dead. Alas, whom may I trust? And therewithal King Mark took a sword in his hand, and sought Sir Sadok from chamber to chamber to slay him. When Sir Sadok saw King Mark come with his sword in his hand he said thus: Beware, King Mark, and come not nigh me; for wit thou well that I saved Alisander his life, of which I never repent me, for thou falsely and cowardly slew his father Boudwin, traitorly for his good deeds; wherefore I pray Almighty Jesu send Alisander might and strength to be revenged upon thee. And now beware King Mark of young Alisander, for he is made a knight. Alas, said King Mark, that ever I

His mother's charge

King Mark's ordinance

should hear a traitor say so afore me. And therewith four knights of King Mark's drew their swords to slay Sir Sadok, but anon Sir Sadok slew them all in King Mark's presence. And then Sir Sadok passed forth into his chamber, and took his horse and his harness, and rode on his way a good pace. For there was neither Sir Tristram, neither Sir Dinas, nor Sir Fergus, that would Sir Sadok any evil will. Then was King Mark wroth, and thought to destroy Sir Alisander and Sir Sadok that had saved him; for King Mark dreaded and hated Alisander most of any man living. When Sir Tristram understood that Alisander was made knight, anon forthwithal he sent him a letter, praying him and charging him that he would draw him to the court of King Arthur, and that he put him in the rule and in the hands of Sir Launcelot. So this letter was sent to Alisander from his cousin, Sir Tristram. And at that time he thought to do after his commandment. Then King Mark called a knight that brought him the tidings from Alisander, and bade him abide still in that country. Sir, said that knight, so must I do, for in my own country I dare not come. No force, said King Mark, I shall give thee here double as much lands as ever thou hadst of thine own. But within short space Sir Sadok met with that false knight, and slew him. Then was King Mark wood wroth out of measure. Then he sent unto Queen Morgan le Fay, and to the Queen of Northgalis, praying them in his letters that they two sorceresses would set all the

country in fire with ladies that were enchantresses, and by such that were dangerous knights, as Malgrin, Breuse Saunce Pité, that by no mean Alisander le Orphelin should escape, but either he should be taken or slain. This ordinance made King Mark for to destroy Alisander.

Alisander at the tournament

CHAPTER XXXVI. How Sir Alisander won the prize at a tournament, and of Morgan le Fay: and how he fought with Sir Malgrin, and slew him. Now turn we again unto Sir Alisander, that at his departing his mother, took with him his father's bloody shirt. So that he bare with him always till his death day, in tokening to think of his father's death. So was Alisander purposed to ride to London, by the counsel of Sir Tristram, to Sir Launcelot. And by fortune he went by the seaside, and rode wrong. And there he won at a tournament the gree that King Carados made. And there he smote down King Carados and twenty of his knights, and also Sir Safere, a good knight that was Sir Palomides' brother, the good knight. All this saw a damosel, and saw the best knight joust that ever she saw. And ever as he smote down knights he made them to swear to wear none harness in a twelvemonth and a day. This is well said, said Morgan le Fay, this is the knight that I would fain see. And so she took her palfrey, and rode a great while, and then she rested her in her pavilion. So there came four knights, two were armed, and two

Alisander fights with Malgrin

were unarmed, and they told Morgan le Fay their names: the first was Elias de Gomeret, the second was Cari de Gomeret, those were armed; that other twain were of Camiliard, cousins unto Queen Guenever, and that one hight Guy, and that other hight Garaunt, those were unarmed. There these four knights told Morgan le Fay how a young knight had smitten them down before a castle. For the maiden of that castle said that he was but late made knight, and young. But as we suppose, but if it were Sir Tristram, or Sir Launcelot, or Sir Lamorak, the good knight, there is none that might sit him a buffet with a spear. Well, said Morgan le Fay, I shall meet that knight or it be long time, an he dwell in that country. So turn we to the damosel of the castle, that when Alisander le Orphelin had for-jousted the four knights, she called him to her, and said thus: Sir knight, wilt thou for my sake joust and fight with a knight, for my sake, of this country, that is and hath been long time an evil neighbour to me? His name is Malgrin, and he will not suffer me to be married in no manner wise for all that I can do, or any knight for my sake. Damosel, said Alisander, an he come whiles I am here I will fight with him, and my poor body for your sake I will jeopard. And therewithal she sent for him, for he was at her commandment. And when either had a sight of other, they made them ready for to joust, and they came together eagerly, and Malgrin brised his spear upon Alisander, and

and is sore wounded

Alisander smote him again so hard that he bare him quite from his saddle to the earth. But this Malgrin arose lightly, and dressed his shield and drew his sword, and bade him alight, saying: Though thou have the better of me on horseback, thou shalt find that I shall endure like a knight on foot. It is well said, said Alisander; and so lightly he avoided his horse and betook him to his varlet. And then they rushed together like two boars, and laid on their helms and shields long time, by the space of three hours, that never man could say which was the better knight. And in the meanwhile came Morgan le Fay to the damosel of the castle, and they beheld the battle. But this Malgrin was an old roted knight, and he was called one of the dangerous knights of the world to do battle on foot, but on horseback there were many better. And ever this Malgrin awaited to slay Alisander, and so wounded him wonderly sore, that it was marvel that ever he might stand, for he had bled so much blood; for Alisander fought wildly, and not wittily. And that other was a felonious knight, and awaited him, and smote him sore. And sometime they rushed together with their shields, like two boars or rams, and fell grovelling both to the earth. Now knight, said Malgrin, hold thy hand a while, and tell me what thou art. I will not, said Alisander, but if me list: but tell me thy name, and why thou keepest this country, or else thou shalt die of my hands. Wit thou well, said Malgrin, that for this maiden's love, of this castle, I

Alisander slays Malgrin

have slain ten good knights by mishap; and by outrage and orgulité of myself I have slain ten other knights. So God me help, said Alisander, this is the foulest confession that ever I heard knight make, nor never heard I speak of other men of such a shameful confession; wherefore it were great pity and great shame unto me that I should let thee live any longer; therefore keep thee as well as ever thou mayest, for as I am true knight, either thou shalt slay me or else I shall slay thee, I promise thee faithfully. Then they lashed together fiercely, and at the last Alisander smote Malgrin to the earth. And then he raced off his helm, and smote off his head lightly. And when he had done and ended this battle, anon he called to him his varlet, the which brought him his horse. And then he, weening to be strong enough, would have mounted. And so she laid Sir Alisander in an horse litter, and led him into the castle, for he had no foot nor might to stand upon the earth; for he had sixteen great wounds, and in especial one of them was like to be his death.

CHAPTER XXXVII. How Queen Morgan le Fay had Alisander in her castle, and how she healed his wounds. Then Queen Morgan le Fay searched his wounds, and gave such an ointment unto him that he should have died. And on the morn when she came to him he complained him sore; and then she put other ointments upon him, and then he

was out of his pain. Then came the damosel of the castle, and said unto Morgan le Fay: I pray you help me that this knight might wed me, for he hath won me with his hands. Ye shall see, said Morgan le Fay, what I shall say. Then Morgan le Fay went unto Alisander, and bade in anywise that he should refuse this lady, an she desire to wed you, for she is not for you. So the damosel came and desired of him marriage. Damosel, said Orphelin, I thank you, but as yet I cast me not to marry in this country. Sir, she said, sithen ye will not marry me, I pray you insomuch as ye have won me, that ye will give me to a knight of this country that hath been my friend, and loved me many years. With all my heart, said Alisander, I will assent thereto. Then was the knight sent for, his name was Gerine le Grose. And anon he made them handfast, and wedded them. Then came Queen Morgan le Fay to Alisander, and bade him arise, and put him in an horse litter, and gave him such a drink that in three days and three nights he waked never, but slept; and so she brought him to her own castle that at that time was called La Beale Regard. Then Morgan le Fay came to Alisander, and asked him if he would fain be whole. Who would be sick, said Alisander, an he might be whole? Well, said Morgan le Fay, then shall ye promise me by your knighthood that this day twelvemonth and a day ye shall not pass the compass of this castle, and without doubt ye shall lightly be whole. I assent, said Sir Alisander. And

Morgan le Fay and Alisander

Alisander repents him of his promise

there he made her a promise: then was he soon whole. And when Alisander was whole, then he repented him of his oath, for he might not be revenged upon King Mark. Right so there came a damosel that was cousin to the Earl of Pase, and she was cousin to Morgan le Fay. And by right that castle of La Beale Regard should have been hers by true inheritance. So this damosel entered into this castle where lay Alisander, and there she found him upon his bed, passing heavy and all sad.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. How Alisander was delivered from Queen Morgan le Fay by the means of a damosel. Sir knight, said the damosel, an ye would be merry I could tell you good tidings. Well were me, said Alisander, an I might hear of good tidings, for now I stand as a prisoner by my promise. Sir, she said, wit you well that ye be a prisoner, and worse than ye ween; for my lady, my cousin Queen Morgan le Fay, keepeth you here for none other intent but for to do her pleasure with you when it liketh her. O Jesu defend me, said Alisander, from such pleasure; for I had liefer cut away my hangers than I would do her such pleasure. As Jesu help me, said the damosel, an ye would love me and be ruled by me, I shall make your deliverance with your worship. Tell me, said Alisander, by what means, and ye shall have my love. Fair knight, said she, this castle of right ought to be mine, and I have an uncle the which is a mighty earl, he is Earl of Pase, and

of all folks he hateth most Morgan le Fay; and I shall send unto him and pray him for my sake to destroy this castle for the evil customs that be used therein; and then will he come and set wild-fire on every part of the castle, and I shall get you out at a privy postern, and there shall ye have your horse and your harness. Ye say well, damosel, said Alisander. And then she said: Ye may keep the room of this castle this twelvemonth and a day, then break ye not your oath. Truly, fair damosel, said Alisander, ye say sooth. And then he kissed her, and did to her pleasaunce as it pleased them both at times and leisures. So anon she sent unto her uncle and bade him come and destroy that castle, for as the book saith, he would have destroyed that castle afore time had not that damosel been. When the earl understood her letters he sent her word again that on such a day he would come and destroy that castle. So when that day came she showed Alisander a postern wherethrough he should flee into a garden, and there he should find his armour and his horse. When the day came that was set, thither came the Earl of Pase with four hundred knights, and set on fire all the parts of the castle, that or they ceased they left not a stone standing. And all this while that the fire was in the castle he abode in the garden. And when the fire was done he let make a cry that he would keep that piece of earth thereas the castle of La Beale Regard was a twelvemonth and a day, from all manner knights that would come. So it happed there was a duke that

He is delivered by a damosel

He jousts with Sagramore

hight Ansirus, and he was of the kin of Sir Launcelot. And this knight was a great pilgrim, for every third year he would be at Jerusalem. And because he used all his life to go in pilgrimage men called him Duke Ansirus the Pilgrim. And this duke had a daughter that hight Alice, that was a passing fair woman, and because of her father she was called Alice la Beale Pilgrim. And anon as she heard of this cry she went unto Arthur's court, and said openly in hearing of many knights, that what knight may overcome that knight that keepeth that piece of earth shall have me and all my lands. When the knights of the Round Table heard her say thus many were glad, for she was passing fair and of great rents. Right so she let cry in castles and towns as fast on her side as Alisander did on his side. Then she dressed her pavilion straight by the piece of the earth that Alisander kept. So she was not so soon there but there came a knight of Arthur's court that hight Sagramore le Desirous, and he proffered to joust with Alisander; and they encountered, and Sagramore le Desirous brised his spear upon Sir Alisander, but Sir Alisander smote him so hard that he avoided his saddle. And when La Beale Alice saw him joust so well, she thought him a passing goodly knight on horseback. And then she leapt out of her pavilion, and took Sir Alisander by the bridle, and thus she said: Fair knight, I require thee of thy knighthood show me thy visage. I dare well, said Alisander, show my visage. And then he put off his helm; and she saw his

visage, she said: O sweet Jesu, thee I must love, and never other. Then show me your visage, said he. Alice la Beale Pilgrim

CHAPTER XXXIX. How Alisander met with Alice la Beale Pilgrim, and how he jousted with two knights; and after of him and of Sir Mordred. Then she unwimpled her visage. And when he saw her he said: Here have I found my love and my lady. Truly, fair lady, said he, I promise you to be your knight, and none other that beareth the life. Now, gentle knight, said she, tell me your name. My name is, said he, Alisander le Orphelin. Now, damosel, tell me your name, said he. My name is, said she, Alice la Beale Pilgrim. And when we be more at our heart's ease, both ye and I shall tell other of what blood we be come. So there was great love betwixt them. And as they thus talked there came a knight that hight Harsouse le Berbuse, and asked part of Sir Alisander's spears. Then Sir Alisander encountered with him, and at the first Sir Alisander smote him over his horse's croup. And then there came another knight that hight Sir Hewgon, and Sir Alisander smote him down as he did that other. Then Sir Hewgon proffered to do battle on foot. Sir Alisander overcame him with three strokes, and there would have slain him had he not yielded him. So then Alisander made both those knights to swear to wear none armour in a twelvemonth and a day. Then Sir Alisander alit down, and went to rest him

Alisander overcomes several knights

and repose him. Then the damosel that helped Sir Alisander out of the castle, in her play told Alice all together how he was prisoner in the castle of La Beale Regard, and there she told her how she got him out of prison. Sir, said Alice la Beale Pilgrim, meseemeth ye are much beholding to this maiden. That is truth, said Sir Alisander. And there Alice told him of what blood she was come. Sir, wit ye well, she said, that I am of the blood of King Ban, that was father unto Sir Launcelot. Y-wis, fair lady, said Alisander, my mother told me that my father was brother unto a king, and I nigh cousin unto Sir Tristram. Then this while came there three knights, that one hight Vains, and the other hight Harvis de les Marches, and the third hight Perin de la Montaine. And with one spear Sir Alisander smote them down all three, and gave them such falls that they had no list to fight upon foot. So he made them to swear to wear none arms in a twelvemonth. So when they were departed Sir Alisander beheld his lady Alice on horseback as he stood in her pavilion. And then was he so enamoured upon her that he wist not whether he were on horseback or on foot. Right so came the false knight Sir Mordred, and saw Sir Alisander was assotted upon his lady; and therewithal he took his horse by the bridle, and led him here and there, and had cast to have led him out of that place to have shamed him. When the damosel that helped him out of that castle saw how shamefully he was led, anon she let arm her, and set a shield upon her shoulder; and

therewith she mounted upon his horse, and gat a naked sword in her hand, and she thrust unto Alisander with all her might, and she gave him such a buffet that he thought the fire flew out of his eyen. And when Alisander felt that stroke he looked about him, and drew his sword. And when she saw that, she fled, and so did Mordred into the forest, and the damosel fled into the pavilion. So when Alisander understood himself how the false knight would have shamed him had not the damosel been, then was he wroth with himself that Sir Mordred was so escaped his hands. But then Sir Alisander and Alice had good game at the damosel, how sadly she hit him upon the helm. Then Sir Alisander jousted thus day by day, and on foot he did many battles with many knights of King Arthur's court, and with many knights strangers. Therefore to tell all the battles that he did it were overmuch to rehearse, for every day within that twelvemonth he had ado with one knight or with other, and some day he had ado with three or with four; and there was never knight that put him to the worse. And at the twelvemonth's end he departed with his lady, Alice la Beale Pilgrim. And the damosel would never go from him, and so they went into their country of Benoye, and lived there in great joy.

Mordred and Alisander

Galahalt lets cry a jousts

CHAPTER XL. How Sir Galahalt did do cry a jousts in Surluse, and Queen Guenever's knights should joust against all that would come. But as the book saith, King Mark would never stint till he had slain him by treason. And by Alice he gat a child that hight Bellengerus le Beuse. And by good fortune he came to the court of King Arthur, and proved a passing good knight; and he revenged his father's death, for the false King Mark slew both Sir Tristram and Alisander falsely and feloniously. And it happed so that Alisander had never grace nor fortune to come to King Arthur's court. For an he had come to Sir Launcelot, all knights said that knew him, he was one of the strongest knights that was in Arthur's days, and great dole was made for him. So let we of him pass, and turn we to another tale. So it befell that Sir Galahalt, the haut prince, was lord of the country of Surluse, whereof came many good knights. And this noble prince was a passing good man of arms, and ever he held a noble fellowship together. And then he came to Arthur's court and told him his intent, how this was his will, how he would let cry a jousts in the country of Surluse, the which country was within the lands of King Arthur, and there he asked leave to let cry a jousts. I will give you leave, said King Arthur; but wit thou well, said King Arthur, I may not be there. Sir, said Queen Guenever, please it you to give me leave to be at that jousts. With right good will, said Arthur; for Sir Galahalt, the haut

prince, shall have you in governance. Sir, said Galahalt, I will as ye will. Sir, then the Queen I will take with me, and such knights as please me best. Do as ye list, said King Arthur. So anon she commanded Sir Launcelot to make him ready with such knights as he thought best. So in every good town and castle of this land was made a cry, that in the country of Surluse Sir Galahalt should make a joust that should last eight days, and how the haut prince, with the help of Queen Guenever's knights, should joust against all manner of men that would come. When this cry was known, kings and princes, dukes and earls, barons and noble knights, made them ready to be at that jousts. And at the day of jousting there came in Sir Dinadan disguised, and did many great deeds of arms.

The jousting

CHAPTER XLI. How Sir Launcelot fought in the tournament, and how Sir Palomides did arms there for a damosel. Then at the request of Queen Guenever and of King Bagdemagus Sir Launcelot came into the range, but he was disguised, and that was the cause that few folk knew him; and there met with him Sir Ector de Maris, his own brother, and either brake their spears upon other to their hands. And then either gat another spear. And then Sir Launcelot smote down Sir Ector de Maris, his own brother. That saw Sir Bleoberis, and he smote Sir Launcelot such a buffet upon the helm that he wist not well where he was. Then Sir Launcelot was wroth, and smote Sir

Sir Launcelot at the tournament

Bleoberis so sore upon the helm that his head bowed down backward. And he smote eft another buffet, that he avoided his saddle; and so he rode by, and thrust forth to the thickest. When the King of Northgalis saw Sir Ector and Bleoberis lie on the ground then was he wroth, for they came on his party against them of Surluse. So the King of Northgalis ran to Sir Launcelot, and brake a spear upon him all to pieces. Therewith Sir Launcelot overtook the King of Northgalis, and smote him such a buffet on the helm with his sword that he made him to avoid his horse; and anon the king was horsed again. So both the King Bagdemagus' and the King of Northgalis party hurled to other; and then began a strong medley, but they of Northgalis were far bigger. When Sir Launcelot saw his party go to the worst he thrang into the thickest press with a sword in his hand; and there he smote down on the right hand and on the left hand, and pulled down knights and raced off their helms, and that all men had wonder that ever one knight might do such deeds of arms. When Sir Meliagaunce, that was son unto King Bagdemagus, saw how Sir Launcelot fared he marvelled greatly. And when he understood that it was he, he wist well that he was disguised for his sake. Then Sir Meliagaunce prayed a knight to slay Sir Launcelot's horse, either with sword or with spear. At that time King Bagdemagus met with a knight that hight Sauseise, a good knight, to whom he said: Now fair Sauseise, encounter with my son

Palomides fights with Goneries

Meliagaunce and give him large payment, for I would he were well beaten of thy hands, that he might depart out of this field. And then Sir Sauseise encountered with Sir Meliagaunce, and either smote other down. And then they fought on foot, and there Sauseise had won Sir Meliagaunce, had there not come rescues. So then the haut prince blew to lodging, and every knight unarmed him and went to the great feast. Then in the meanwhile there came a damosel to the haut prince, and complained that there was a knight that hight Goneries that withheld her all her lands. Then the knight was there present, and cast his glove to him or to any that would fight in her name. So the damosel took up the glove all heavily for default of a champion. Then there came a varlet to her and said: Damosel, will ye do after me? Full fain, said the damosel. Then go you unto such a knight that lieth here beside in an hermitage, and that followeth the questing beast, and pray him to take the battle upon him, and anon I wot well he will grant you. So anon she took her palfrey, and within a while she found that knight, that was Sir Palomides. And when she required him he armed him and rode with her, and made her to go to the haut prince, and to ask leave for her knight to do battle. I will well, said the haut prince. Then the knights were ready in the field to joust on horseback; and either gat a spear in their hands, and met so fiercely together that their spears all to-shivered. Then they flang out swords, and Sir Palomides smote Sir

Galahalt and Palomides fight together

Goneries down to the earth. And then he raced off his helm and smote off his head. Then they went to supper, and the damosel loved Palomides as paramour, but the book saith she was of his kin. So then Palomides disguised himself in this manner, in his shield he bare the questing beast, and in all his trappings. And when he was thus ready, he sent to the haut prince to give him leave to joust with other knights, but he was adoubted of Sir Launcelot. The haut prince sent him word again that he should be welcome, and that Sir Launcelot should not joust with him. Then Sir Galahalt, the haut prince, let cry what knight somever he were that smote down Sir Palomides should have his damosel to himself.

CHAPTER XLII. How Sir Galahalt and Palomides fought together, and of Sir Dinadan and Sir Galahalt. Here beginneth the second day. Anon as Sir Palomides came into the field, Sir Galahalt, the haut prince, was at the range end, and met with Sir Palomides, and he with him, with great spears. And then they came so hard together that their spears all to-shivered, but Sir Galahalt smote him so hard that he bare him backward over his horse, but yet he lost not his stirrups. Then they drew their swords and lashed together many sad strokes, that many worshipful knights left their business to behold them. But at the last Sir Galahalt, the haut prince, smote a stroke of might unto Palomides, sore upon the helm; but the helm was so hard that the

sword might not bite, but slipped and smote off the head of the horse of Sir Palomides. When the haut prince wist and saw the good knight fall unto the earth he was ashamed of that stroke. And therewith he alit down off his own horse, and prayed the good knight, Palomides, to take that horse of his gift, and to forgive him that deed. Sir, said Palomides, I thank you of your great goodness, for ever of a man of worship a knight shall never have disworship; and so he mounted upon that horse, and the haut prince had another anon. Now, said the haut prince, I release to you that maiden, for ye have won her. Ah, said Palomides, the damosel and I be at your commandment. So they departed, and Sir Galahalt did great deeds of arms. And right so came Dinadan and encountered with Sir Galahalt, and either came to other so fast with their spears that their spears brake to their hands. But Dinadan had weened the haut prince had been more weary than he was. And then he smote many sad strokes at the haut prince; but when Dinadan saw he might not get him to the earth he said: My lord, I pray you leave me, and take another. The haut prince knew not Dinadan, and left goodly for his fair words. And so they departed; but soon there came another and told the haut prince that it was Dinadan. Forsooth, said the prince, therefore am I heavy that he is so escaped from me, for with his mocks and japes now shall I never have done with him. And then Galahalt rode fast after him, and bade him: Abide, Dinadan,

Galahalt encounters Dinadan

Palomides and Archade

for King Arthur's sake. Nay, said Dinadan, so God me help, we meet no more together this day. Then in that wrath the haut prince met with Meliagaunce, and he smote him in the throat that an he had fallen his neck had broken; and with the same spear he smote down another knight. Then came in they of Northgalis and many strangers, and were like to have put them of Surluse to the worse, for Sir Galahalt, the haut prince, had ever much in hand. So there came the good knight, Semound the Valiant, with forty knights, and he beat them all aback. Then the Queen Guenever and Sir Launcelot let blow to lodging, and every knight unarmed him, and dressed him to the feast.

CHAPTER XLIII. How Sir Archade appelled Sir Palomides of treason, and how Sir Palomides slew him. When Palomides was unarmed he asked lodging for himself and the damosel. Anon the haut prince commanded them to lodging. And he was not so soon in his lodging but there came a knight that hight Archade, he was brother unto Goneries that Palomides slew afore in the damosel's quarrel. And this knight, Archade, called Sir Palomides traitor, and appelled him for the death of his brother. By the leave of the haut prince, said Palomides, I shall answer thee. When Sir Galahalt understood their quarrel he bade them go to dinner: And as soon as ye have dined look that either knight be ready in the field. So when they had dined they were armed both, and took their horses, and the queen, and the

prince, and Sir Launcelot, were set to behold them; and so they let run their horses, and there Sir Palomides bare Archade on his spear over his horse's tail. And then Palomides alit and drew his sword, but Sir Archade might not arise; and there Sir Palomides raced off his helm, and smote off his head. Then the haut prince and Queen Guenever went unto supper. Then King Bagdemagus sent away his son Meliagaunce because Sir Launcelot should not meet with him, for he hated Sir Launcelot, and that knew he not.

Palomides smites off Archade's head

CHAPTER XLIV. Of the third day, and how Sir Palomides jousted with Sir Lamorak, and other things. Now beginneth the third day of jousting; and at that day King Bagdemagus made him ready; and there came against him King Marsil, that had in gift an island of Sir Galahalt the haut prince; and this island had the name Pomitain. Then it befell that King Bagdemagus and King Marsil of Pomitain met together with spears, and King Marsil had such a buffet that he fell over his horse's croup. Then came there in a knight of King Marsil to revenge his lord, and King Bagdemagus smote him down, horse and man, to the earth. So there came an earl that hight Arrouse, and Sir Breuse, and an hundred knights with them of Pomitain, and the King of Northgalis was with them; and all these were against them of Surluse. And then there began great battle, and many knights were cast under horses' feet. And ever King Bagdemagus did

Palomides' deeds of arms

best, for he first began, and ever he held on. Gaheris, Gawaine's brother, smote ever at the face of King Bagdemagus; and at the last King Bagdemagus hurtled down Gaheris, horse and man. Then by adventure Sir Palomides, the good knight, met with Sir Blamore de Ganis, Sir Bleoberis' brother. And either smote other with great spears, that both their horses and knights fell to the earth. But Sir Blamore had such a fall that he had almost broken his neck, for the blood brast out at nose, mouth, and his ears, but at the last he recovered well by good surgeons. Then there came in the Duke Chaleins of Clarance; and in his governance there came a knight that hight Elis la Noire; and there encountered with him King Bagdemagus, and he smote Elis that he made him to avoid his saddle. So the Duke Chaleins of Clarance did there great deeds of arms, and of so late as he came in the third day there was no man did so well except King Bagdemagus and Sir Palomides, that the prize was given that day to King Bagdemagus. And then they blew unto lodging, and unarmed them, and went to the feast. Right so came Dinadan, and mocked and japed with King Bagdemagus that all knights laughed at him, for he was a fine japer, and well loving all good knights. So anon as they had dined there came a varlet bearing four spears on his back; and he came to Palomides, and said thus: Here is a knight by hath sent you the choice of four spears, and requireth you for your lady's sake to take that one half of these spears, and joust with him in

Palomides fights with Lamorak

the field. Tell him, said Palomides, I will not fail him. When Sir Galahalt wist of this, he bade Palomides make him ready. So the Queen Guenever, the haut prince, and Sir Launcelot, they were set upon scaffolds to give the judgment of these two knights. Then Sir Palomides and the strange knight ran so eagerly together that their spears brake to their hands. Anon withal either of them took a great spear in his hand and all to-shivered them in pieces. And then either took a greater spear, and then the knight smote down Sir Palomides, horse and man, to the earth. And as he would have passed over him the strange knight's horse stumbled and fell down upon Palomides. Then they drew their swords and lashed together wonderly sore a great while. Then the haut prince and Sir Launcelot said they saw never two knights fight better than they did; but ever the strange knight doubled his strokes, and put Palomides aback; therewithal the haut prince cried: Ho: and then they went to lodging. And when they were unarmed they knew it was the noble knight Sir Lamorak. When Sir Launcelot knew that it was Sir Lamorak he made much of him, for above all earthly men he loved him best except Sir Tristram. Then Queen Guenever commended him, and so did all other good knights made much of him, except Sir Gawaine's brethren. Then Queen Guenever said unto Sir Launcelot: Sir, I require you that an ye joust any more, that ye joust with none of the blood of my lord Arthur. So he promised he would not as at that time.

More of the jousting

CHAPTER XLV. Of the fourth day, and of many great feats of arms. Here beginneth the fourth day. Then came into the field the King with the hundred knights, and all they of Northgalis, and the Duke Chaleins of Clarance, and King Marsil of Pomitain, and there came Safere, Palomides' brother, and there he told him tidings of his mother. And his name was called the Earl, and so he appelled him afore King Arthur: For he made war upon our father and mother, and there I slew him in plain battle. So they went into the field, and the damosel with them; and there came to encounter again them Sir Bleoberis de Ganis, and Sir Ector de Maris. Sir Palomides encountered with Sir Bleoberis, and either smote other down. And in the same wise did Sir Safere and Sir Ector, and the two couples did battle on foot. Then came in Sir Lamorak, and he encountered with the King with the hundred knights, and smote him quite over his horse's tail. And in the same wise he served the King of Northgalis, and also he smote down King Marsil. And so or ever he stint he smote down with his spear and with his sword thirty knights. When Duke Chaleins saw Lamorak do so great prowess he would not meddle with him for shame; and then he charged all his knights in pain of death that none of you touch him; for it were shame to all good knights an that knight were shamed. Then the two kings gathered them together, and all they set upon Sir Lamorak; and he failed them not, but rushed here and there.

Lamorak gains the prize

smiting on the right hand and on the left, and raced off many helms, so that the haut prince and Queen Guenever said they saw never knight do such deeds of arms on horseback. Alas, said Launcelot to King Bagdemagus, I will arm me and help Sir Lamorak. And I will ride with you, said King Bagdemagus. And when they two were horsed they came to Sir Lamorak that stood among thirty knights; and well was him that might reach him a buffet, and ever he smote again mightily. Then came there into the press Sir Launcelot, and he threw down Sir Mador de la Porte. And with the truncheon of that spear he threw down many knights. And King Bagdemagus smote on the left hand and on the right hand marvellously well. And then the three kings fled aback. Therewithal then Sir Galahalt let blow to lodging, and all the heralds gave Sir Lamorak the prize. And all this while fought Palomides, Sir Bleoberis, Sir Safere, Sir Ector on foot, never were there four knights evener matched. And then they were departed, and had unto their lodging, and unarmed them, and so they went to the great feast. But when Sir Lamorak was come into the court Queen Guenever took him in her arms and said: Sir, well have ye done this day. Then came the haut prince, and he made of him great joy, and so did Dinadan, for he wept for joy; but the joy that Sir Launcelot made of Sir Lamorak there might no man tell. Then they went unto rest, and on the morn the haut prince let blow unto the field.

Still of the tournament

CHAPTER XLVI. Of the fifth day, and how Sir Lamorak behaved him. Here beginneth the fifth day. So it befell that Sir Palomides came in the morntide, and proffered to joust thereas King Arthur was in a castle there besides Surluse; and there encountered with him a worshipful duke, and there Sir Palomides smote him over his horse's croup. And this duke was uncle unto King Arthur. Then Sir Elise's son rode unto Palomides, and Palomides served Elise in the same wise. When Sir Uwaine saw this he was wroth; then he took his horse and encountered with Sir Palomides, and Palomides smote him so hard that he went to the earth, horse and man. And for to make a short tale, he smote down three brethren of Sir Gawaine, that is for to say Mordred, Gaheris, and Agravaine. O Jesu, said Arthur, this is a great despite of a Saracen that he shall smite down my blood. And therewithal King Arthur was wood wroth, and thought to have made him ready to joust. That espied Sir Lamorak, that Arthur and his blood were discomfit; and anon he was ready, and asked Palomides if he would any more joust. Why should I not? said Palomides. Then they hurtled together, and brake their spears, and all to-shivered them, that all the castle rang of their dints. Then either gat a greater spear in his hand, and they came so fiercely together; but Sir Palomides' spear all to-brast and Sir Lamorak did hold. Therewithal Sir Palomides lost his stirrups and lay up-right on his horse back. And then Sir

Palomides returned again and took his damosel, and Sir Safere returned his way. So when he was departed King Arthur came to Sir Lamorak and thanked him of his goodness, and prayed him to tell him his name. Sir, said Lamorak, wit thou well, I owe you my service, but as at this time I will not abide here, for I see of mine enemies many about me. Alas, said Arthur, now wot I well it is Sir Lamorak de Galis. O Lamorak, abide with me, and by my crown I shall never fail thee: and not so hardy in Gawaine's head, nor none of his brethren, to do thee any wrong. Sir, said Sir Lamorak, wrong have they done me, and to you both. That is truth, said the King, for they slew their own mother and my sister, the which me sorely grieveth: it had been much fairer and better that ye had wedded her, for ye are a king's son as well as they. O Jesu, said the noble knight Sir Lamorak unto Arthur, her death shall I never forget. I promise you, and make my avow unto God, I shall revenge her death as soon as I see time convenable. And if it were not at the reverence of your highness I should now have been revenged upon Sir Gawaine and his brethren. Truly, said Arthur, I will make you at accord. Sir, said Lamorak, as at this time I may not abide with you, for I must to the jousts where is Sir Launcelot, and the haut prince Sir Galahalt. Then there was a damosel that was daughter to King Bandes. And there was a Saracen knight that hight Corsabrin, and he loved the damosel, and in no wise he would suffer her to

Lamorak and Arthur

Palomides fights with Corsabrin

be married; for ever this Corsabrin noised her, and named her that she was out of her mind; and thus he let her that she might not be married.

CHAPTER XLVII. How Sir Palomides fought with Corsabrin for a lady, and how Palomides slew Corsabrin. So by fortune this damosel heard tell that Palomides did much for damosels' sake; so she sent to him a pensel, and prayed him to fight with Sir Corsabrin for her love, and he should have her, and her lands of her father's that should fall to her. Then the damosel sent unto Corsabrin, and bade him go unto Sir Palomides that was a paynim as well as he, and she gave him warning that she had sent him her pensel, and if he might overcome Palomides she would wed him. When Corsabrin wist of her deeds then was he wood wroth and angry, and rode unto Surluse where the haut prince was, and there he found Sir Palomides ready, the which had the pensel. So there they waged battle either with other afore Galahalt. Well, said the haut prince, this day must noble knights joust, and at after dinner we shall see how ye can speed. Then they blew to jousts; and in came Dinadan, and met with Sir Gerin, a good knight, and he threw him down over his horse's croup; and Sir Dinadan overthrew four knights more; and there he did great deeds of arms, for he was a good knight, but he was a scoffer and a japer, and the merriest knight among fellowship that was that time living. And he had such a

custom that he loved every good knight, and every good knight loved him again. So then when the haut prince saw Dinadan do so well he sent unto Sir Launcelot and bade him strike down Sir Dinadan: And when that ye have done so bring him afore me and the noble Queen Guenever. Then Sir Launcelot did as he was required. Then Sir Lamorak and he smote down many knights, and raced off helms, and drove all the knights afore them. And so Sir Launcelot smote down Sir Dinadan, and made his men to unarm him, and so brought him to the Queen and the haut prince, and they laughed at Dinadan so sore that they might not stand. Well, said Sir Dinadan, yet have I no shame, for the old shrew, Sir Launcelot, smote me down. So they went to dinner, and all the court had good sport at Dinadan. Then when the dinner was done they blew to the field to behold Sir Palomides and Corsabrin. Sir Palomides pight his pensel in midst of the field; and then they hurtled together with their spears as it were thunder, and either smote other to the earth. And then they pulled out their swords, and dressed their shields, and lashed together mightily as mighty knights, that wellnigh there was no piece of harness would hold them, for this Corsabrin was a passing felonious knight. Corsabrin, said Palomides, wilt thou release me yonder damosel and the pensel? Then was Corsabrin wroth out of measure, and gave Palomides such a buffet that he kneeled on his knee. Then

and overcomes him

and smites off his head

Palomides arose lightly, and smote him upon the helm that he fell down right to the earth. And therewith he raced off his helm and said: Corsabrin, yield thee or else thou shalt die of my hands. Fie on thee, said Corsabrin, do thy worst. Then he smote off his head. And therewithal came a stink of his body when the soul departed, that there might nobody abide the savour. So was the corpse had away and buried in a wood, because he was a paynim. Then they blew unto lodging, and Palomides was unarmed. Then he went unto Queen Guenever, to the haut prince, and to Sir Launcelot. Sir, said the haut prince, here have ye seen this day a great miracle by Corsabrin, what savour there was when the soul departed from the body. Therefore, sir, we will require you to take the baptism upon you, and I promise you all knights will set the more by you, and say more worship by you. Sir, said Palomides, I will that ye all know that into this land I came to be christened, and in my heart I am christened, and christened will I be. But I have made such an avow that I may not be christened till I have done seven true battles for Jesu's sake, and then will I be christened; and I trust God will take mine intent, for I mean truly. Then Sir Palomides prayed Queen Guenever and the haut prince to sup with him. And so they did, both Sir Launcelot and Sir Lamorak, and many other good knights. So on the morn they heard their mass, and blew the field, and then knights made them ready.

CHAPTER XLVIII. Of the sixth day, and what then was done. Here beginneth the sixth day. Then came therein Sir Gaheris, and there encountered with him Sir Ossaise of Surluse, and Sir Gaheris smote him over his horse's croup. And then either party encountered with other, and there were many spears broken, and many knights cast under feet. So there came in Sir Dornard and Sir Aglovale, that were brethren unto Sir Lamorak, and they met with other two knights, and either smote other so hard that all four knights and horses fell to the earth. When Sir Lamorak saw his two brethren down he was wroth out of measure, and then he gat a great spear in his hand, and therewithal he smote down four good knights, and then his spear brake. Then he pulled out his sword, and smote about him on the right hand and on the left hand, and raced off helms and pulled down knights, that all men marvelled of such deeds of arms as he did, for he fared so that many knights fled. Then he horsed his brethren again, and said: Brethren, ye ought to be ashamed to fall so off your horses! what is a knight but when he is on horseback? I set not by a knight when he is on foot, for all battles on foot are but pelowres battles. For there should no knight fight on foot but if it were for treason, or else he were driven thereto by force; therefore, brethren, sit fast on your horses, or else fight never more afore me. With that came in the Duke Chaleins of Clarance, and there encountered with him

Lamorak and his brethren

Dinadan's japes

the Earl Ulbawes of Surluse, and either of them smote other down. Then the knights of both parties horsed their lords again, for Sir Ector and Bleoberis were on foot waiting on the Duke Chaleins. And the King with the hundred knights was with the Earl of Ulbawes. With that came Gaheris and lashed to the King with the hundred knights, and he to him again. Then came the Duke Chaleins and departed them. Then they blew to lodging, and the knights unarmed them and drew them to their dinner; and at the middes of their dinner in came Dinadan and began to rail. Then he beheld the haut prince, that seemed wroth with some fault that he saw; for he had a custom he loved no fish, and because he was served with fish, the which he hated, therefore he was not merry. When Sir Dinadan had espied the haut prince, he espied where was a fish with a great head, and that he gat betwixt two dishes, and served the haut prince with that fish. And then he said thus: Sir Galahalt, well may I liken you to a wolf, for he will never eat fish, but flesh; then the haut prince laughed at his words. Well, well, said Dinadan to Launcelot, what devil do ye in this country, for here may no mean knights win no worship for thee. Sir Dinadan, said Launcelot, I ensure thee I shall no more meet with thee nor with thy great spear, for I may not sit in my saddle when that spear hitteth me. And if I be happy I shall beware of that boistous body that thou bearest. Well, said Launcelot, make good watch ever: God forbid that ever we

meet but if it be at a dish of meat. Then laughed the Queen and the haut prince, that they might not sit at their table; thus they made great joy till on the morn, and then they heard mass, and blew to field. And Queen Guenever and all the estates were set, and judges armed clean with their shields to keep the right.

Still of the jousting

CHAPTER XLIX. Of the seventh battle, and how Sir Launcelot, being disguised like a maid, smote down Sir Dinadan. Now beginneth the seventh battle. There came in the Duke Cambines, and there encountered with him Sir Aristance, that was counted a good knight, and they met so hard that either bare other down, horse and man. Then came there the Earl of Lambaile and helped the duke again to horse. Then came there Sir Ossaise of Surluse, and he smote the Earl Lambaile down from his horse. Then began they to do great deeds of arms, and many spears were broken, and many knights were cast to the earth. Then the King of Northgalis and the Earl Ulbawes smote together that all the judges thought it was like mortal death. This meanwhile Queen Guenever, and the haut prince, and Sir Launcelot, made there Sir Dinadan make him ready to joust. I would, said Dinadan, ride into the field, but then one of you twain will meet with me. Per dieu, said the haut prince, ye may see how we sit here as judges with our shields, and always mayest thou behold whether we sit here or not.

Launcelot and Dinadan

So Sir Dinadan departed and took his horse, and met with many knights, and did passing well. And as he was departed, Sir Launcelot disguised himself, and put upon his armour a maiden's garment freshly attired. Then Sir Launcelot made Sir Galihodin to lead him through the range, and all men had wonder what damosel it was. And so as Sir Dinadan came into the range, Sir Launcelot, that was in the damosel's array, gat Galihodin's spear, and ran unto Sir Dinadan. And always Sir Dinadan looked up thereas Sir Launcelot was, and then he saw one sit in the stead of Sir Launcelot, armed. But when Dinadan saw a manner of a damosel he dread perils that it was Sir Launcelot disguised, but Sir Launcelot came on him so fast that he smote him over his horse's croup; and then with great scorns they gat Sir Dinadan into the forest there beside, and there they dispoiled him unto his shirt, and put upon him a woman's garment, and so brought him into the field: and so they blew unto lodging. And every knight went and unarmed them. Then was Sir Dinadan brought in among them all. And when Queen Guenever saw Sir Dinadan brought so among them all, then she laughed that she fell down, and so did all that there were. Well, said Dinadan to Launcelot, thou art so false that I can never beware of thee. Then by all the assent they gave Sir Launcelot the prize, the next was Sir Lamorak de Galis, the third was Sir Palomides, the fourth was King Bagdemagus; so these four knights had the prize, and there

was great joy, and great nobley in all the court. And on the morn Queen Guenever and Sir Launcelot departed unto King Arthur, but in no wise Sir Lamorak would not go with them. I shall undertake, said Sir Launcelot, that an ye will go with us King Arthur shall charge Sir Gawaine and his brethren never to do you hurt. As for that, said Sir Lamorak, I will not trust Sir Gawaine nor none of his brethren; and wit ye well, Sir Launcelot, an it were not for my lord King Arthur's sake, I should match Sir Gawaine and his brethren well enough. But to say that I should trust them, that shall I never, and therefore I pray you recommend me unto my lord Arthur, and unto all my lords of the Round Table. And in what place that ever I come I shall do you service to my power: and sir, it is but late that I revenged that, when my lord Arthur's kin were put to the worse by Sir Palomides. Then Sir Lamorak departed from Sir Launcelot, and either wept at their departing.

Lamorak takes leave of Launcelot

CHAPTER L. How by treason Sir Tristram was brought to a tournament for to have been slain, and how he was put in prison.

Now turn we from this matter, and speak we of Sir Tristram, of whom this book is principally of, and leave we the King and the Queen, Sir Launcelot, and Sir Lamorak, and here beginneth the treason of King Mark, that he ordained against Sir Tristram. There was cried by the coasts of Cornwall a great tournament and jousts, and all was done by Sir

The tournament at Cornwall

Galahalt the haut prince and King Bagdemagus, to the intent to slay Launcelot, or else utterly destroy him and shame him, because Sir Launcelot had always the higher degree; therefore this prince and this king made this jousts against Sir Launcelot. And thus their counsel was discovered unto King Mark, whereof he was full glad. Then King Mark bethought him that he would have Sir Tristram unto that tournament disguised that no man should know him, to that intent that the haut prince should ween that Sir Tristram were Sir Launcelot. So at these jousts came in Sir Tristram. And at that time Sir Launcelot was not there, but when they saw a knight disguised do such deeds of arms, they weened it had been Sir Launcelot. And in especial King Mark said it was Sir Launcelot plainly. Then they set upon him, both King Bagdemagus, and the haut prince, and their knights, that it was wonder that ever Sir Tristram might endure that pain. Notwithstanding for all the pain that he had, Sir Tristram won the degree at that tournament, and there he hurt many knights and bruised them, and they hurt him and bruised him wonderly sore. So when the jousts were all done they knew well that it was Sir Tristram de Liones; and all that were on King Mark's party were glad that Sir Tristram was hurt, and the remnant were sorry of his hurt; for Sir Tristram was not so behated as was Sir Launcelot within the realm of England. Then came King Mark unto Sir Tristram and said: Fair nephew, I am sorry of your hurts.

Tristram in disguise

Gramercy my lord, said Sir Tristram. Then King Mark made Sir Tristram to be put in an horse bier in great sign of love, and said: Fair cousin, I shall be your leech myself. And so he rode forth with Sir Tristram, and brought him to a castle by daylight. And then King Mark made Sir Tristram to eat. And then after he gave him a drink, the which as soon as he had drunk he fell a-sleep. And when it was night he made him to be carried to another castle, and there he put him in a strong prison, and there he ordained a man and a woman to give him his meat and drink. So there he was a great while. Then was Sir Tristram missed, and no creature wist where he was become. When La Beale Isoud heard how he was missed, privily she went unto Sir Sadok, and prayed him to espy where was Sir Tristram. Then when Sadok wist how Sir Tristram was missed, and anon espied that he was put in prison by King Mark and the traitors of Magouns, then Sadok and two of his cousins laid them in an embushment, fast by the Castle of Tintagil, in arms. And as by fortune, there came riding King Mark and four of his nephews, and a certain of the traitors of Magouns. When Sir Sadok espied them he brake out of the bushment, and set there upon them. And when King Mark espied Sir Sadok he fled as fast as he might, and there Sir Sadok slew all the four nephews unto King Mark. But these traitors of Magouns slew one of Sadok's cousins with a great wound in the neck, but Sadok smote the other to the death. Then Sir Sadok

Tristram imprisoned by King Mark

rode upon his way unto a castle that was called Liones, and there he espied of the treason and felony of King Mark. So they of that castle rode with Sir Sadok till that they came to a castle that hight Arbray, and there in the town they found Sir Dinas the Seneschal, that was a good knight. But when Sir Sadok had told Sir Dinas of all the treason of King Mark he defied such a king, and said he would give up his lands that he held of him. And when he said these words all manner knights said as Sir Dinas said. Then by his advice, and of Sir Sadok's, he let stuff all the towns and castles within the country of Liones, and assembled all the people that they might make.

CHAPTER LI. How King Mark let do counterfeit letters from the Pope, and how Sir Percivale delivered Sir Tristram out of prison. Now turn we unto King Mark, that when he was escaped from Sir Sadok he rode unto the Castle of Tintagil, and there he made great cry and noise, and cried unto harness all that might bear arms. Then they sought and found where were dead four cousins of King Mark's, and the traitor of Magouns. Then the king let inter them in a chapel. Then the king let cry in all the country that held of him, to go unto arms, for he understood to the war he must needs. When King Mark heard and understood how Sir Sadok and Sir Dinas were arisen in the country of Liones he remembered of wiles and treason. Lo thus he did: he let make and counterfeit letters from

the Pope, and did make a strange clerk to bear them unto King Mark; the which letters specified that King Mark should make him ready, upon pain of cursing, with his host to come to the Pope, to help to go to Jerusalem, for to make war upon the Saracens. When this clerk was come by the mean of the king, anon withal King Mark sent these letters unto Sir Tristram and bade him say thus: that an he would go war upon the miscreants, he should be had out of prison, and to have all his power. When Sir Tristram understood this letter, then he said thus to the clerk: Ah, King Mark, ever hast thou been a traitor, and ever will be; but, Clerk, said Sir Tristram, say thou thus unto King Mark: Sin the Apostle Pope hath sent for him, bid him go thither himself; for tell him, traitor king as he is, I will not go at his commandment, get I out of prison as I may, for I see I am well rewarded for my true service. Then the clerk returned unto King Mark, and told him of the answer of Sir Tristram. Well, said King Mark, yet shall he be beguiled. So he went into his chamber, and counterfeit letters; and the letters specified that the Pope desired Sir Tristram to come himself, to make war upon the miscreants. When the clerk was come again to Sir Tristram and took him these letters, then Sir Tristram beheld these letters, and anon espied they were of King Mark's counterfeiting. Ah, said Sir Tristram, false hast thou been ever, King Mark, and so wilt thou end. Then the clerk departed from Sir Tristram and came to King Mark again. By

King Mark's treachery

Percivale delivers Tristram

then there were come four wounded knights within the Castle of Tintagil, and one of them his neck was nigh broken in twain. Another had his arm stricken away, the third was borne through with a spear, the fourth had his teeth stricken in twain. And when they came afore King Mark they cried and said: King, why fleest thou not, for all this country is arisen clearly against thee? Then was King Mark wroth out of measure. And in the meanwhile there came into the country Sir Percivale de Galis to seek Sir Tristram. And when he heard that Sir Tristram was in prison, Sir Percivale made clearly the deliverance of Sir Tristram by his knightly means. And when he was so delivered he made great joy of Sir Percivale, and so each one of other. Sir Tristram said unto Sir Percivale: An ye will abide in these marches I will ride with you. Nay, said Percivale, in this country I may not tarry, for I must needs into Wales. So Sir Percivale departed from Sir Tristram, and rode straight unto King Mark, and told him how he had delivered Sir Tristram; and also he told the king that he had done himself great shame for to put Sir Tristram in prison, for he is now the knight of most renown in this world living. And wit thou well the noblest knights of the world love Sir Tristram, and if he will make war upon you ye may not abide it. That is truth, said King Mark, but I may not love Sir Tristram because he loveth my Queen and my wife, La Beale Isoud. Ah, fie for shame, said Sir Percivale, say ye never so more. Are ye

not uncle unto Sir Tristram, and he your nephew? Ye should never think that so noble a knight as Sir Tristram is, that he would do himself so great a villainy to hold his uncle's wife; howbeit, said Sir Percivale, he may love your Queen sinless, because she is called one of the fairest ladies of the world. Then Sir Percivale departed from King Mark. So when he was departed King Mark bethought him of more treason: notwithstanding King Mark granted Sir Percivale never by no manner of means to hurt Sir Tristram. So anon King Mark sent unto Sir Dinas the Seneschal that he should put down all the people that he had raised, for he sent him an oath that he would go himself unto the Pope of Rome to war upon the miscreants; and this is a fairer war than thus to arise the people against your king. When Sir Dinas understood that King Mark would go upon the miscreants, then Sir Dinas in all the haste put down all the people; and when the people were departed every man to his home, then King Mark espied where was Sir Tristram with La Beale Isoud; and there by treason King Mark let take him and put him in prison, contrary to his promise that he made unto Sir Percivale. When Queen Isoud understood that Sir Tristram was in prison she made as great sorrow as ever made lady or gentlewoman. Then Sir Tristram sent a letter unto La Beale Isoud, and prayed her to be his goodlady; and if it pleased her to make a vessel ready for her and him, he would go with her unto the realm of Logris, that is this land.

again imprisoned

Tristram and Isoud escape to England

When La Beale Isoud understood Sir Tristram's letters and his intent she sent him another, and bade him be of good comfort, for she would do make the vessel ready, and all thing to purpose. Then La Beale Isoud sent unto Sir Dinas, and to Sadok, and prayed them in anywise to take King Mark, and put him in prison, unto the time that she and Sir Tristram were departed unto the realm of Logris. When Sir Dinas the Seneschal understood the treason of King Mark he promised her again, and sent her word that King Mark should be put in prison. And as they devised it so it was done. And then Sir Tristram was delivered out of prison; and anon in all the haste Queen Isoud and Sir Tristram went and took their counsel with that they would have with them when they departed.

CHAPTER LII. How Sir Tristram and La Beale Isoud came unto England, and how Sir Launcelot brought them to Joyous Gard.

Then La Beale Isoud and Sir Tristram took their vessel, and came by water into this land. And so they were not in this land four days but there came a cry of a jousts and tournament that King Arthur let make. When Sir Tristram heard tell of that tournament he disguised himself, and La Beale Isoud, and rode unto that tournament. And when he came there he saw many knights joust and tourney; and so Sir Tristram dressed him to the range, and to make short conclusion, he overthrew fourteen knights of the Round Table. When Sir

Launcelot brings them to Joyous Gard

Launcelot saw these knights thus overthrown, Sir Launcelot dressed him to Sir Tristram. That saw La Beale Isoud how Sir Launcelot was come into the field. Then La Beale Isoud sent unto Sir Launcelot a ring, and bade him wit that it was Sir Tristram de Liones. When Sir Launcelot understood that there was Sir Tristram he was full glad, and would not joust. Then Sir Launcelot espied whither Sir Tristram yede, and after him he rode; and then either made of other great joy. And so Sir Launcelot brought Sir Tristram and La Beale Isoud unto Joyous Gard, that was his own castle, that he had won with his own hands. And there Sir Launcelot put them in to weld for their own. And wit ye well that castle was garnished and furnished for a king and a queen royal there to have sojourned. And Sir Launcelot charged all his people to honour them and love them as they would do himself. So Sir Launcelot departed unto King Arthur; and then he told Queen Guenever how he that jousted so well at the last tournament was Sir Tristram. And there he told her how he had with him La Beale Isoud maugre King Mark, and so Queen Guenever told all this unto King Arthur. When King Arthur wist that Sir Tristram was escaped and come from King Mark, and had brought La Beale Isoud with him, then was he passing glad. So because of Sir Tristram King Arthur let make a cry, that on May Day should be a jousts before the castle of Lonazep; and that castle was fast by Joyous Gard. And thus Arthur devised, that

The tournament at Lonazep

all the knights of this land, and of Cornwall, and of North Wales, should joust against all these countries, Ireland, Scotland, and the remnant of Wales, and the country of Gore, and Surluse, and of Listinoise, and they of Northumberland, and all they that held lands of Arthur on this half the sea. When this cry was made many knights were glad and many were unglad. Sir, said Launcelot unto Arthur, by this cry that ye have made ye will put us that be about you in great jeopardy, for there be many knights that have great envy to us; therefore when we shall meet at the day of jousts there will be hard shift among us. As for that, said Arthur, I care not; there shall we prove who shall be best of his hands. So when Sir Launcelot understood wherefore King Arthur made this jousting, then he made such purveyance that La Beale Isoud should behold the jousts in a secret place that was honest for her estate. Now turn we unto Sir Tristram and to La Beale Isoud, how they made great joy daily together with all manner of mirths that they could devise; and every day Sir Tristram would go ride a-hunting, for Sir Tristram was that time called the best chaser of the world, and the noblest blower of an horn of all manner of measures; for as books report, of Sir Tristram came all the good terms of venery and hunting, and all the sizes and measures of blowing of an horn; and of him we had first all the terms of hawking, and which were beasts of chase and beasts of venery, and which were vermins, and all the blasts that long to

all manner of games. First to the uncoupling, to the seeking, to the rechate, to the flight, to the death, and to strake, and many other blasts and terms, that all manner of gentlemen have cause to the world's end to praise Sir Tristram, and to pray for his soul.

Tristram rides a-hunting

CHAPTER LIII. How by the counsel of La Beale Isoud Sir Tristram rode armed, and how he met with Sir Palomides. So on a day La Beale Isoud said unto Sir Tristram: I marvel me much, said she, that ye remember not yourself, how ye be here in a strange country, and here be many perilous knights; and well ye wot that King Mark is full of treason; and that ye will ride thus to chase and to hunt unarmed ye might be destroyed. My fair lady and my love, I cry you mercy, I will no more do so. So then Sir Tristram rode daily a-hunting armed, and his men bearing his shield and his spear. So on a day a little afore the month of May, Sir Tristram chased an hart passing eagerly, and so the hart passed by a fair well. And then Sir Tristram alit and put off his helm to drink of that bubbly water. Right so he heard and saw the questing beast come to the well. When Sir Tristram saw that beast he put on his helm, for he deemed he should hear of Sir Palomides, for that beast was his quest. Right so Sir Tristram saw where came a knight armed, upon a noble courser, and he saluted him, and they spake of many things; and this knight's name was Breuse Saunce Pité. And right so withal there came

He meets Palomides

unto them the noble knight Sir Palomides, and either saluted other, and spake fair to other. Fair knights, said Sir Palomides, I can tell you tidings. What is that? said those knights. Sirs, wit ye well that King Mark is put in prison by his own knights, and all was for love of Sir Tristram; for King Mark had put Sir Tristram twice in prison, and once Sir Percivale delivered the noble knight Sir Tristram out of prison. And at the last time Queen La Beale Isoud delivered him, and went clearly away with him into this realm; and all this while King Mark, the false traitor, is in prison. Is this truth? said Palomides; then shall we hastily hear of Sir Tristram. And as for to say that I love La Beale Isoud paramours, I dare make good that I do, and that she hath my service above all other ladies, and shall have the term of my life. And right so as they stood talking they saw afore them where came a knight all armed, on a great horse, and one of his men bare his shield, and the other his spear. And anon as that knight espied them he gat his shield and his spear and dressed him to joust. Fair fellows, said Sir Tristram, yonder is a knight will joust with us, let see which of us shall encounter with him, for I see well he is of the court of King Arthur. It shall not be long or he be met withal, said Sir Palomides, for I found never no knight in my quest of this glasting beast, but an he would joust I never refused him. As well may I, said Breuse Saunce Pité, follow that beast as ye. Then shall ye do battle with me, said Palomides.

So Sir Palomides dressed him unto that other knight, Sir Bleoberis, that was a full noble knight, nigh kin unto Sir Launcelot. And so they met so hard that Sir Palomides fell to the earth, horse and all. Then Sir Bleoberis cried aloud and said thus: Make thee ready thou false traitor knight, Breuse Saunce Pité, for wit thou certainly I will have ado with thee to the utterance for the noble knights and ladies that thou hast falsely betrayed. When this false knight and traitor, Breuse Saunce Pité, heard him say so, he took his horse by the bridle and fled his way as fast as ever his horse might run, for sore he was of him afeard. When Sir Bleoberis saw him flee he followed fast after, through thick and through thin. And by fortune as Sir Breuse fled, he saw even afore him three knights of the Table Round, of the which the one hight Sir Ector de Maris, the other hight Sir Percivale de Galis, the third hight Sir Harry le Fise Lake, a good knight and an hardy. And as for Sir Percivale, he was called that time of his time one of the best knights of the world, and the best assured. When Breuse saw these knights he rode straight unto them, and cried unto them and prayed them of rescues. What need have ye? said Sir Ector. Ah, fair knights, said Sir Breuse, here followeth me the most traitor knight, and most coward, and most of villainy; his name is Breuse Saunce Pité, and if he may get me he will slay me without mercy and pity. Abide with us, said Sir Percivale, and we shall warrant you. Then were they ware of Sir Bleoberis

Sir Breuse Saunce Pité

Three knights rescue him

that came riding all that he might. Then Sir Ector put himself forth to joust afore them all. When Sir Bleoberis saw that they were four knights and he but himself, he stood in a doubt whether he would turn or hold his way. Then he said to himself: I am a knight of the Table Round, and rather than I should shame mine oath and my blood I will hold my way whatsoever fall thereof. And then Sir Ector dressed his spear, and smote either other passing sore, but Sir Ector fell to the earth. That saw Sir Percivale, and he dressed his horse toward him all that he might drive, but Sir Percivale had such a stroke that horse and man fell to the earth. When Sir Harry saw that they were both to the earth then he said to himself: Never was Breuse of such prowess. So Sir Harry dressed his horse, and they met together so strongly that both the horses and knights fell to the earth, but Sir Bleoberis' horse began to recover again. That saw Breuse and he came hurtling, and smote him over and over, and would have slain him as he lay on the ground. Then Sir Harry le Fise Lake arose lightly, and took the bridle of Sir Breuse's horse, and said: Fie for shame! strike never a knight when he is at the earth, for this knight may be called no shameful knight of his deeds, for yet as men may see thereas he lieth on the ground he hath done worshipfully, and put to the worse passing good knights. Therefore will I not let, said Sir Breuse. Thou shalt not choose, said Sir Harry, as at this time. Then when Sir Breuse saw that he might not choose nor

have his will he spake fair. Then Sir Harry let him go. And then anon he made his horse to run over Sir Bleoberis, and rashed him to the earth like if he would have slain him. When Sir Harry saw him do so villainously he cried: Traitor knight, leave off for shame. And as Sir Harry would have taken his horse to fight with Sir Breuse, then Sir Breuse ran upon him as he was half upon his horse, and smote him down, horse and man, to the earth, and had near slain Sir Harry, the good knight. That saw Sir Percivale, and then he cried: Traitor knight, what dost thou? And when Sir Percivale was upon his horse Sir Breuse took his horse and fled all that ever he might, and Sir Percivale and Sir Harry followed after him fast, but ever the longer they chased the farther were they behind. Then they turned again and came to Sir Ector de Maris and to Sir Bleoberis. Ah, fair knights, said Bleoberis, why have ye succoured that false knight and traitor? Why, said Sir Harry, what knight is he? for well I wot it is a false knight, said Sir Harry, and a coward and a felonious knight. Sir, said Bleoberis, he is the most coward knight, and a devourer of ladies and a destroyer of good knights, and especially of Arthur's. What is your name? said Sir Ector. My name is Sir Bleoberis de Ganis. Alas, fair cousin, said Ector, forgive it me, for I am Sir Ector de Maris. Then Sir Percivale and Sir Harry made great joy that they met with Bleoberis, but all they were heavy that Sir Breuse was escaped them, whereof they made great dole.

His treachery

Palomides and Bleoberis meet

CHAPTER LIV. Of Sir Palomides, and how he met with Sir Bleoberis and with Sir Ector, and of Sir Percivale. Right so as they stood thus there came Sir Palomides, and when he saw the shield of Bleoberis lie on the earth, then said Palomides: He that oweth that shield let him dress him to me, for he smote me down here fast by at a fountain, and therefore I will fight for him on foot. I am ready, said Bleoberis, here to answer thee, for wit thou well, sir knight, it was I, and my name is Bleoberis de Ganis. Well art thou met, said Palomides, and wit thou well my name is Palomides the Saracen; and either of them hated other to the death. Sir Palomides, said Ector, wit thou well there is neither thou nor none knight that beareth the life that slayeth any of our blood but he shall die for it; therefore an thou list to fight go seek Sir Launcelot or Sir Tristram, and there shall ye find your match. With them have I met, said Palomides, but I had never no worship of them. Was there never no manner of knight, said Sir Ector, but they that ever matched with you? Yes, said Palomides, there was the third, a good knight as any of them, and of his age he was the best that ever I found; for an he might have lived till he had been an harder man there liveth no knight now such, and his name was Sir Lamorak de Galis. And as he had jousted at a tournament there he overthrew me and thirty knights more, and there he won the degree. And at his departing there met him Sir Gawaine and his brethren, and with great pain they slew him

feloniously, unto all good knights' great damage. Anon as Sir Percivale heard that his brother was dead, Sir Lamorak, he fell over his horse's mane swooning, and there he made the greatest dole that ever made knight. And when Sir Percivale arose he said: Alas, my good and noble brother Sir Lamorak, now shall we never meet, and I trow in all the wide world a man may not find such a knight as he was of his age; and it is too much to suffer the death of our father King Pellinore, and now the death of our good brother Sir Lamorak. Then in the meanwhile there came a varlet from the court of King Arthur, and told them of the great tournament that should be at Lonazep, and how these lands, Cornwall and Northgalis, should be against all them that would come.

Lamorak's death

CHAPTER LV. How Sir Tristram met with Sir Dinadan, and of their devices, and what he said to Sir Gawaine's brethren. Now turn we unto Sir Tristram, that as he rode a-hunting he met with Sir Dinadan, that was coming into that country to seek Sir Tristram. Then Sir Dinadan told Sir Tristram his name, but Sir Tristram would not tell him his name, wherefore Sir Dinadan was wroth. For such a foolish knight as ye are, said Sir Dinadan, I saw but late this day lying by a well, and he fared as he slept; and there he lay like a fool grinning, and would not speak, and his shield lay by him, and his horse stood by him; and well I wot he was a lover. Ah, fair sir, said Sir Tristram, are ye not a lover? Marry, fie

Dinadan seeks Tristram

on that craft! said Sir Dinadan. That is evil said, said Sir Tristram, for a knight may never be of prowess but if he be a lover. It is well said, said Sir Dinadan; now tell me your name, sith ye be a lover, or else I shall do battle with you. As for that, said Sir Tristram, it is no reason to fight with me but I tell you my name; and as for that my name shall ye not wit as at this time. Fie for shame, said Dinadan, art thou a knight and durst not tell thy name to me? therefore I will fight with thee. As for that, said Sir Tristram, I will be advised, for I will not do battle but if me list. And if I do battle, said Sir Tristram, ye are not able to withstand me. Fie on thee, coward, said Sir Dinadan. And thus as they hoved still, they saw a knight come riding against them. Lo, said Sir Tristram, see where cometh a knight riding, will joust with you. Anon, as Sir Dinadan beheld him he said: That is the same doted knight that I saw lie by the well, neither sleeping nor waking. Well, said Sir Tristram, I know that knight well with the covered shield of azure, he is the King's son of Northumberland, his name is Epinegris; and he is as great a lover as I know, and he loveth the King's daughter of Wales, a full fair lady. And now I suppose, said Sir Tristram, an ye require him he will joust with you, and then shall ye prove whether a lover be a better knight, or ye that will not love no lady. Well, said Dinadan, now shalt thou see what I shall do. Therewithal Sir Dinadan spake on high and said: Sir knight, make thee ready to joust with me, for

it is the custom of errant knights one to joust with other. Sir, said Epinegris, is that the rule of you errant knights for to make a knight to joust will he or nill? As for that, said Dinadan, make thee ready, for here is for me. And therewithal they spurred their horses and met together so hard that Epinegris smote down Sir Dinadan. Then Sir Tristram rode to Sir Dinadan and said: How now, meseemeth the lover hath well sped. Fie on thee, coward, said Sir Dinadan, and if thou be a good knight revenge me. Nay, said Sir Tristram, I will not joust as at this time, but take your horse and let us go hence. God defend me, said Sir Dinadan, from thy fellowship, for I never sped well sin I met with thee: and so they departed. Well, said Sir Tristram, peradventure I could tell you tidings of Sir Tristram. God defend me, said Dinadan, from thy fellowship, for Sir Tristram were mickle the worse an he were in thy company: and then they departed. Sir, said Sir Tristram, yet it may happen I shall meet with you in other places. So rode Sir Tristram unto Joyous Gard, and there he heard in that town great noise and cry. What is this noise? said Sir Tristram. Sir, said they, here is a knight of this castle that hath been long among us, and right now he is slain with two knights, and for none other cause but that our knight said that Sir Launcelot were a better knight than Sir Gawaine. That was a simple cause, said Sir Tristram, for to slay a good knight for to say well by his master. That is little remedy to us, said the men of the town.

They meet

Tristram fights with Agravaine and Gaheris

For an Sir Launcelot had been here soon we should have been revenged upon the false knights. When Sir Tristram heard them say so he sent for his shield and for his spear, and lightly within a while he had overtaken them, and bade them turn and amend that they had misdone. What amends wouldst thou have? said the one knight. And therewith they took their course, and either met other so hard that Sir Tristram smote down that knight over his horse's tail. Then the other knight dressed him to Sir Tristram, and in the same wise he served the other knight. And then they gat off their horses as well as they might, and dressed their shields and swords to do their battle to the utterance. Knights, said Sir Tristram, ye shall tell me of whence ye are, and what be your names, for such men ye might be ye should hard escape my hands; and ye might be such men of such a country that for all your evil deeds ye should pass quit. Wit thou well, sir knight, said they, we fear not to tell thee our names, for my name is Sir Agravaine, and my name is Gaheris, brethren unto the good knight Sir Gawaine, and we be nephews unto King Arthur. Well, said Sir Tristram, for King Arthur's sake I shall let you pass as at this time. But it is shame, said Sir Tristram, that Sir Gawaine and ye be come of so great a blood that ye four brethren are so named as ye be, for ye be called the greatest destroyers and murderers of good knights that be now in this realm; for it is but as I heard say that Sir Gawaine and ye slew among you a better knight than ever ye

were, that was the noble knight Sir Lamorak de Galis. An it had pleased God, said Sir Tristram, I would I had been by Sir Lamorak at his death. Then shouldst thou have gone the same way, said Sir Gaheris. Fair knight, said Sir Tristram, there must have been many more knights than ye are. And therewithal Sir Tristram departed from them toward Joyous Gard. And when he was departed they took their horses, and the one said to the other: We will overtake him and be revenged upon him in the despite of Sir Lamorak.

and overthrows them

CHAPTER LVI. How Sir Tristram smote down Sir Agravaine and Sir Gaheris, and how Sir Dinadan was sent for by La Beale Isoud. So when they had overtaken Sir Tristram, Sir Agravaine bade him: Turn, traitor knight. That is evil said, said Sir Tristram; and therewith he pulled out his sword, and smote Sir Agravaine such a buffet upon the helm that he tumbled down off his horse in a swoon, and he had a grievous wound. And then he turned to Gaheris, and Sir Tristram smote his sword and his helm together with such a might that Gaheris fell out of his saddle: and so Sir Tristram rode unto Joyous Gard, and there he alit and unarmed him. So Sir Tristram told La Beale Isoud of all his adventure, as ye have heard tofore. And when she heard him tell of Sir Dinadan: Sir, said she, is not that he that made the song by King Mark? That same is he, said Sir Tristram, for he is the best bourder and japer, and a noble knight of his

Isoud sends for Dinadan

hands, and the best fellow that I know, and all good knights love his fellowship. Alas, sir, said she, why brought ye not him with you? Have ye no care, said Sir Tristram, for he rideth to seek me in this country; and therefore he will not away till he have met with me. And there Sir Tristram told La Beale Isoud how Sir Dinadan held against all lovers. Right so there came in a varlet and told Sir Tristram how there was come an errant knight into the town, with such colours upon his shield. That is Sir Dinadan, said Sir Tristram; wit ye what ye shall do, said Sir Tristram: send ye for him, my Lady Isoud, and I will not be seen, and ye shall hear the merriest knight that ever ye spake withal, and the maddest talker; and I pray you heartily that ye make him good cheer. Then anon La Beale Isoud sent into the town, and prayed Sir Dinadan that he would come into the castle and repose him there with a lady. With a good will, said Sir Dinadan; and so he mounted upon his horse and rode into the castle; and there he alit, and was unarmed, and brought into the castle. Anon La Beale Isoud came unto him, and either saluted other; then she asked him of whence that he was. Madam, said Dinadan, I am of the court of King Arthur, and knight of the Table Round, and my name is Sir Dinadan. What do ye in this country? said La Beale Isoud. Madam, said he, I seek Sir Tristram the good knight, for it was told me that he was in this country. It may well be, said La Beale Isoud, but I am not ware of him. Madam, said Dinadan, I marvel of Sir

Tristram and more other lovers, what aileth them to be so mad and so sotted upon women. Why, said La Beale Isoud, are ye a knight and be no lover? it is shame to you: wherefore ye may not be called a good knight but if ye make a quarrel for a lady. God defend me, said Dinadan, for the joy of love is too short, and the sorrow thereof, and what cometh thereof, dureth over long. Ah, said La Beale Isoud, say ye not so, for here fast by was the good knight Sir Bleoberis, that fought with three knights at once for a damosel's sake, and he won her afore the king of Northumberland. It was so, said Sir Dinadan, for I know him well for a good knight and a noble, and come of noble blood; for all be noble knights of whom he is come of, that is Sir Launcelot du Lake. Now I pray you, said La Beale Isoud, tell me will ye fight for my love with three knights that done me great wrong? and insomuch as ye be a knight of King Arthur's I require you to do battle for me. Then Sir Dinadan said: I shall say you ye be as fair a lady as ever I saw any, and much fairer than is my lady Queen Guenever, but wit ye well at one word, I will not fight for you with three knights, Jesu defend me. Then Isoud laughed, and had good game at him. So he had all the cheer that she might make him, and there he lay all that night. And on the morn early Sir Tristram armed him, and La Beale Isoud gave him a good helm; and then he promised her that he would meet with Sir Dinadan, and they two would ride together unto Lonazep, where the tournament should be:

Isoud and Dinadan

Tristram and Dinadan ride to the tournament

And there shall I make ready for you where ye shall see the tournament. Then departed Sir Tristram with two squires that bare his shield and his spears that were great and long.

CHAPTER LVII. How Sir Dinadan met with Sir Tristram, and with jousting with Sir Palomides, Sir Dinadan knew him.

Then after that Sir Dinadan departed, and rode his way a great pace until he had overtaken Sir Tristram. And when Sir Dinadan had overtaken him he knew him anon, and he hated the fellowship of him above all other knights. Ah, said Sir Dinadan, art thou that coward knight that I met with yesterday? keep thee, for thou shalt joust with me maugre thy head. Well, said Sir Tristram, and I am loath to joust. And so they let their horses run, and Sir Tristram missed of him a-purpose, and Sir Dinadan brake a spear upon Sir Tristram, and therewith Sir Dinadan dressed him to draw out his sword. Not so, said Sir Tristram, why are ye so wroth? I will not fight. Fie on thee, coward, said Dinadan, thou shamest all knights. As for that, said Sir Tristram, I care not, for I will wait upon you and be under your protection; for because ye are so good a knight ye may save me. The devil deliver me of thee, said Sir Dinadan, for thou art as goodly a man of arms and of thy person as ever I saw, and the most coward that ever I saw. What wilt thou do with those great spears that thou carriest with thee? I shall give them, said Sir Tristram, to some good

knight when I come to the tournament; and if I see you do best, I shall give them to you. So thus as they rode talking they saw where came an errant knight afore them, that dressed him to joust. Lo, said Sir Tristram, yonder is one will joust; now dress thee to him. Ah, shame betide thee, said Sir Dinadan. Nay, not so, said Tristram, for that knight beseemeth a shrew. Then shall I, said Sir Dinadan. And so they dressed their shields and their spears, and they met together so hard that the other knight smote down Sir Dinadan from his horse. Lo, said Sir Tristram, it had been better ye had left. Fie on thee, coward, said Sir Dinadan. Then Sir Dinadan started up and gat his sword in his hand, and proffered to do battle on foot. Whether in love or in wrath? said the other knight. Let us do battle in love, said Sir Dinadan. What is your name, said that knight, I pray you tell me. Wit ye well my name is Sir Dinadan. Ah, Dinadan, said that knight, and my name is Gareth, the youngest brother unto Sir Gawaine. Then either made of other great cheer, for this Gareth was the best knight of all the brethren, and he proved a good knight. Then they took their horses, and there they spake of Sir Tristram, how such a coward he was; and every word Sir Tristram heard and laughed them to scorn. Then were they ware where came a knight afore them well horsed and well armed, and he made him ready to joust. Fair knights, said Sir Tristram, look betwixt you who shall joust with yonder knight, for I warn you I will not have ado with him.

Dinadan and Gareth joust

Tristram jousts with Palomides

Then shall I, said Sir Gareth. And so they encountered together, and there that knight smote down Sir Gareth over his horse's croup. How now, said Sir Tristram unto Sir Dinadan, dress thee now and revenge the good knight Gareth. That shall I not, said Sir Dinadan, for he hath stricken down a much bigger knight than I am. Ah, said Sir Tristram, now Sir Dinadan, I see and feel well your heart faileth you, therefore now shall ye see what I shall do. And then Sir Tristram hurtled unto that knight, and smote him quite from his horse. And when Sir Dinadan saw that, he marvelled greatly; and then he deemed that it was Sir Tristram. Then this knight that was on foot pulled out his sword to do battle. What is your name? said Sir Tristram. Wit ye well, said that knight, my name is Sir Palomides. What knight hate ye most? said Sir Tristram. Sir knight, said he, I hate Sir Tristram to the death, for an I may meet with him the one of us shall die. Ye say well, said Sir Tristram, and wit ye well that I am Sir Tristram de Liones, and now do your worst. When Sir Palomides heard him say so he was astonied. And then he said thus: I pray you, Sir Tristram, forgive me all mine evil will, and if I live I shall do you service above all other knights that be living; and whereas I have owed you evil will me sore repenteth. I wot not what aileth me, for meseemeth that ye are a good knight, and none other knight that named himself a good knight should not hate you; therefore I require you, Sir Tristram,

take no displeasure at mine unkind words. Sir Palomides, said Sir Tristram, ye say well, and well I wot ye are a good knight, for I have seen ye proved; and many great enterprises have ye taken upon you, and well achieved them; therefore, said Sir Tristram, an ye have any evil will to me, now may ye right it, for I am ready at your hand. Not so, my lord Sir Tristram, I will do you knightly service in all thing as ye will command. And right so I will take you, said Sir Tristram. And so they rode forth on their ways talking of many things. O my lord Sir Tristram, said Dinadan, foul have ye mocked me, for God knoweth I came into this country for your sake, and by the advice of my lord Sir Launcelot; and yet would not Sir Launcelot tell me the certainty of you, where I should find you. Truly, said Sir Tristram, Sir Launcelot wist well where I was, for I abode within his own castle.

They ride to Lonazep

CHAPTER LVIII. How they approached the Castle Lonazep, and of other devices of the death of Sir Lamorak. Thus they rode until they were ware of the Castle Lonazep. And then were they ware of four hundred tents and pavilions, and marvellous great ordinance. So God me help, said Sir Tristram, yonder I see the greatest ordinance that ever I saw. Sir, said Palomides, meseemeth that there was as great an ordinance at the Castle of Maidens upon the rock, where ye won the prize, for I saw myself where ye for-jousted thirty knights. Sir, said Dinadan, and in Surluse, at that tour-

Their talk by the way

nament that Galahalt of the Long Isles made, the which there dured seven days, was as great a gathering as is here, for there were many nations. Who was the best? said Sir Tristram. Sir, it was Sir Launcelot du Lake and the noble knight, Sir Lamorak de Galis, and Sir Launcelot won the degree. I doubt not, said Sir Tristram, but he won the degree, so he had not been overmatched with many knights; and of the death of Sir Lamorak, said Sir Tristram, it was over great pity, for I dare say he was the cleanest mighted man and the best winded of his age that was a-live; for I knew him that he was the biggest knight that ever I met withal, but if it were Sir Launcelot. Alas, said Sir Tristram, full woe is me for his death. And if they were not the cousins of my lord Arthur that slew him, they should die for it, and all those that were consenting to his death. And for such things, said Sir Tristram, I fear to draw unto the court of my lord Arthur; I will that ye wit it, said Sir Tristram unto Gareth. Sir, I blame you not, said Gareth, for well I understand the vengeance of my brethren Sir Gawaine, Agravaine, Gaheris, and Mordred. But as for me, said Sir Gareth, I meddle not of their matters, therefore there is none of them that loveth me. And for I understand they be murderers of good knights I left their company; and God would I had been by, said Gareth, when the noble knight, Sir Lamorak, was slain. Now as Jesu be my help, said Sir Tristram, it is well said of you, for I had liefer than

all the gold betwixt this and Rome I had been there. Ye wis, said Palomides, and so would I had been there, and yet had I never the degree at no jousts nor tournament there-as he was, but he put me to the worse, or on foot or on horseback; and that day that he was slain he did the most deeds of arms that ever I saw knight do in all my life days. And when him was given the degree by my lord Arthur, Sir Gawaine and his three brethren, Agravaine, Gaheris, and Sir Mordred, set upon Sir Lamorak in a privy place, and there they slew his horse. And so they fought with him on foot more than three hours, both before him and behind him; and Sir Mordred gave him his death wound behind him at his back, and all to-hew him: for one of his squires told me that saw it. Fie upon treason, said Sir Tristram, for it killeth my heart to hear this tale. So it doth mine, said Gareth; brethren as they be mine I shall never love them, nor draw in their fellowship for that deed. Now speak we of other deeds, said Palomides, and let him be, for his life ye may not get again. That is the more pity, said Dinadan, for Sir Gawaine and his brethren, except you Sir Gareth, hate all the good knights of the Round Table for the most part; for well I wot an they might privily, they hate my lord Sir Launcelot and all his kin, and great privy despite they have at him; and that is my lord Sir Launcelot well ware of, and that causeth him to have the good knights of his kin about him.

The manner of Lamorak's death

The vessel on Humber bank

CHAPTER LIX. How they came to Humber bank, and how they found a ship there, wherein lay the body of King Hermance.

Sir, said Palomides, let us leave of this matter, and let us see how we shall do at this tournament. By mine advice, said Palomides, let us four hold together against all that will come. Not by my counsel, said Sir Tristram, for I see by their pavilions there will be four hundred knights, and doubt ye not, said Sir Tristram, but there will be many good knights; and be a man never so valiant nor so big, yet he may be overmatched. And so have I seen knights done many times; and when they weened best to have won worship they lost it, for manhood is not worth but if it be medled with wisdom. And as for me, said Sir Tristram, it may happen I shall keep mine own head as well as another. So thus they rode until that they came to Humber bank, where they heard a cry and a doleful noise. Then were they ware in the wind where came a rich vessel hilled over with red silk, and the vessel landed fast by them. Therewith Sir Tristram alit and his knights. And so Sir Tristram went afore and entered into that vessel. And when he came within he saw a fair bed richly covered, and thereupon lay a dead seemly knight, all armed, save the head was all be-bled, with deadly wounds upon him, the which seemed to be a passing good knight. How may this be, said Sir Tristram, that this knight is thus slain? Then Sir Tristram was ware of a letter in the dead knight's hand. Master mariners, said Sir Tristram,

what meaneth that letter? Sir, said they, in that letter ye shall hear and know how he was slain, and for what cause, and what was his name. But sir, said the mariners, wit ye well that no man shall take that letter and read it but if he be a good knight, and that he will faithfully promise to revenge his death, else shall there be no knight see that letter open. Wit ye well, said Sir Tristram, that some of us may revenge his death as well as other, and if it be so as ye mariners say his death shall be revenged. And therewith Sir Tristram took the letter out of the knight's hand, and it said thus: Hermance, king and lord of the Red City, I send unto all knights errant, recommending unto you noble knights of Arthur's court. I beseech them all among them to find one knight that will fight for my sake with two brethren that I brought up of nought, and feloniously and traitorly they have slain me; wherefore I beseech one good knight to revenge my death. And he that revenged my death I will that he have my Red City and all my castles. Sir, said the mariners, wit ye well this king and knight that here lieth was a full worshipful man and of full great prowess, and full well he loved all manner knights errants. So God me help, said Sir Tristram, here is a piteous case, and full fain would I take this enterprise upon me; but I have made such a promise that needs I must be at this great tournament, or else I am shamed. For well I wot for my sake in especial my lord Arthur let make this jousts and tournament in this country; and well I wot

The dead knight

Palomides promises to revenge his death

that many worshipful people will be there at that tournament for to see me; therefore I fear me to take this enterprise upon me that I shall not come again by time to this jousts. Sir, said Palomides, I pray you give me this enterprise, and ye shall see me achieve it worshipfully, other else I shall die in this quarrel. Well, said Sir Tristram, and this enterprise I give you, with this, that ye be with me at this tournament that shall be as this day seven night. Sir, said Palomides, I promise you that I shall be with you by that day if I be unslain or unmaimed.

CHAPTER LX. How Sir Tristram with his fellowship came and were with an host which after fought with Sir Tristram; and other matters. Then departed Sir Tristram, Gareth, and Sir Dinadan, and left Sir Palomides in the vessel; and so Sir Tristram beheld the mariners how they sailed overlong Humber. And when Sir Palomides was out of their sight they took their horses and beheld about them. And then were they ware of a knight that came riding against them unarmed, and nothing about him but a sword. And when this knight came nigh them he saluted them, and they him again. Fair knights, said that knight, I pray you insomuch as ye be knights errant, that ye will come and see my castle, and take such as ye find there; I pray you heartily. And so they rode with him until his castle, and there they were brought into the hall, that was well apparelled; and so they were there unarmed, and set at a

board; and when this knight saw Sir Tristram, anon he knew him. And then this knight waxed pale and wroth at Sir Tristram. When Sir Tristram saw his host make such cheer he marvelled and said: Sir, mine host, what cheer make you? Wit thou well, said he, I fare the worse for thee, for I know thee Sir Tristram de Liones, thou slewest my brother; and therefore I give thee summons I will slay thee an ever I might get thee at large. Sir knight, said Sir Tristram, I am never advised that ever I slew any brother of yours; and if ye say that I did I will make amends unto my power. I will none amends, said the knight, but keep thee from me. So when he had dined Sir Tristram asked his arms, and departed. And so they rode on their ways, and within a while Sir Dinadan saw where came a knight well armed and well horsed, without shield. Sir Tristram, said Sir Dinadan, take keep to yourself, for I dare undertake yonder cometh your host that will have ado with you. Let him come, said Sir Tristram, I shall abide him as well as I may. Anon the knight when he came nigh Sir Tristram he cried and bade him abide and keep him. So they hurtled together, but Sir Tristram smote the other knight so sore that he bare him over his horse's croup. That knight arose lightly and took his horse again, and so rode fiercely to Sir Tristram, and smote him twice hard upon the helm. Sir knight, said Sir Tristram, I pray you leave off and smite me no more, for I would be loath to deal with you an I might choose, for I have your meat

Tristram fights with a knight

Dinadan fights w th Berrant

and your drink within my body. For all that he would not leave; and then Sir Tristram gave him such a buffet upon the helm that he fell up-so-down from his horse, that the blood brast out at the ventails of his helm, and so he lay still likely to be dead. Then Sir Tristram said: Me repenteth of this buffet that I smote so sore, for as I suppose he is dead. And so they left him and rode on their ways. So they had not ridden but a while, but they saw riding against them two full likely knights, well armed and well horsed, and goodly servants about them. The one was Berrant le Apres, and he was called the King with the Hundred Knights; and the other was Sir Segwarides, which were renowned two noble knights. So as they came either by other the King looked upon Sir Dinadan that at that time he had Sir Tristram's helm upon his shoulder, the which helm the king had seen tofore with the Queen of Northgalis, and that Queen the King loved as paramour; and that helm the Queen of Northgalis had given to La Beale Isoud, and the Queen La Beale Isoud gave it to Sir Tristram. Sir knight, said Berrant, where had ye that helm? What would ye? said Sir Dinadan. For I will have ado with thee, said the king, for the love of her that owed that helm, and therefore keep you. So they departed and came together with all their mights of their horses, and there the King with the hundred knights smote Sir Dinadan, horse and all, to the earth; and then he commanded his servant: Go and take thou his helm off, and keep it. So the varlet went to un-

buckle his helm. What helm, what wilt thou do? said Sir Tristram, leave that helm. To what intent, said the king, will ye, sir knight, meddle with that helm? Wit you well, said Sir Tristram, that helm shall not depart from me or it be dearer bought. Then make you ready, said Sir Berrant unto Sir Tristram. So they hurtled together, and there Sir Tristram smote him down over his horse's tail; and then the king arose lightly, and gat his horse lightly again. And then he struck fiercely at Sir Tristram many great strokes. And then Sir Tristram gave Sir Berrant such a buffet upon the helm that he fell down over his horse sore stonied. Lo, said Dinadan, that helm is unhappy to us twain, for I had a fall for it, and now, sir king, have ye another fall. Then Segwarides asked: Who shall joust with me? I pray thee, said Sir Gareth unto Dinadan, let me have this jousts. Sir, said Dinadan, I pray you take it as for me. That is no reason, said Tristram, for this jousts should be yours. At a word, said Dinadan, I will not thereof. Then Gareth dressed him to Segwarides, and there Sir Segwarides smote Gareth and his horse to the earth. Now, said Sir Tristram to Dinadan, joust with yonder knight. I will not thereof, said Dinadan. Then will I, said Sir Tristram. And then Sir Tristram ran to him, and gave him a fall; and so they left them on foot, and Sir Tristram rode unto Joyous Gard, and there Sir Gareth would not of his courtesy have gone into this castle, but Sir Tristram would not suffer him to depart.

Tristram overthrows Berrant

Palomides reaches Hermance's castle

And so they alit and unarmed them, and had great cheer. But when Dinadan came afore La Beale Isoud he cursed the time that ever he bare Sir Tristram's helm, and there he told her how Sir Tristram had mocked him. Then was there laughing and japing at Sir Dinadan, that they wist not what to do with him.

CHAPTER LXI. How Palomides went for to fight with two brethren for the death of King Hermance. Now will we leave them merry within Joyous Gard, and speak we of Sir Palomides. Then Sir Palomides sailed evenlong Humber to the coasts of the sea, where was a fair castle. And at that time it was early in the morning, afore day. Then the mariners went unto Sir Palomides that slept fast. Sir knight, said the mariners, ye must arise, for here is a castle there ye must go into. I assent me, said Sir Palomides; and therewithal he arrived. And then he blew his horn that the mariners had given him. And when they within the castle heard that horn they put forth many knights; and there they stood upon the walls, and said with one voice: Welcome be ye to this castle. And then it waxed clear day, and Sir Palomides entered into the castle. And within a while he was served with many divers meats. Then Sir Palomides heard about him much weeping and great dole. What may this mean? said Sir Palomides; I love not to hear such a sorrow, and fain I would know what it meaneth. Then there came afore him one whose name was Sir

Ebel, that said thus: Wit ye well, sir knight, this dole and sorrow is here made every day, and for this cause: we had a king that hight Hermance, and he was King of the Red City, and this king that was lord was a noble knight, large and liberal of his expense; and in the world he loved nothing so much as he did errant knights of King Arthur's court, and all jousting, hunting, and all manner of knightly games; for so kind a king and knight had never the rule of poor people as he was; and because of his goodness and gentleness we bemoan him, and ever shall. And all kings and estates may beware by our lord, for he was destroyed in his own default; for had he cherished them of his blood he had yet lived with great riches and rest: but all estates may beware by our king. But alas, said Ebel, that we shall give all other warning by his death. Tell me, said Palomides, and in what manner was your lord slain, and by whom. Sir, said Sir Ebel, our king brought up of children two men that now are perilous knights; and these two knights our king had so in charity, that he loved no man nor trusted no man of his blood, nor none other that was about him. And by these two knights our king was governed, and so they ruled him peaceably and his lands, and never would they suffer none of his blood to have no rule with our king. And also he was so free and so gentle, and they so false and deceivable, that they ruled him peaceably; and that espied the lords of our king's blood, and departed from him unto

The sorrow for his death

The manner of his death

their own livelihood. Then when these two traitors understood that they had driven all the lords of his blood from him, they were not pleased with that rule, but then they thought to have more, as ever it is an old saw: Give a churl rule and thereby he will not be sufficed; for whatsomever he be that is ruled by a villain born, and the lord of the soil to be a gentleman born, the same villain shall destroy all the gentlemen about him: therefore all estates and lords, beware whom ye take about you. And if ye be a knight of King Arthur's court remember this tale, for this is the end and conclusion. My lord and king rode unto the forest hereby by the advice of these traitors, and there he chased at the red deer, armed at all pieces full like a good knight; and so for labour he waxed dry, and then he alit, and drank at a well; and when he was alit, by the assent of these two traitors, that one that hight Helius he suddenly smote our king through the body with a spear, and so they left him there. And when they were departed, then by fortune I came to the well, and found my lord and king wounded to the death. And when I heard his complaint, I let bring him to the water side, and in that same ship I put him alive; and when my lord King Hermance was in that vessel, he required me for the true faith I owed unto him for to write a letter in this manner.

CHAPTER LXII. The copy of the letter written for to revenge the king's death, and how Sir Palomides fought for to have the battle. Recommending unto King Arthur and to all his knights errant, beseeching them all that insomuch as I, King Hermance, King of the Red City, thus am slain by felony and treason, through two knights of mine own, and of mine own bringing up and of mine own making, that some worshipful knight will revenge my death, insomuch I have been ever to my power well willing unto Arthur's court. And who that will adventure his life with these two traitors for my sake in one battle, I, King Hermance, King of the Red City, freely give him all my lands and rents that ever I welded in my life. This letter, said Ebel, I wrote by my lord's commandment, and then he received his Creator; and when he was dead, he commanded me or ever he were cold to put that letter fast in his hand. And then he commanded me to put forth that same vessel down Humber, and I should give these mariners in commandment never to stint until that they came unto Logris, where all the noble knights shall assemble at this time. And there shall some good knight have pity on me to revenge my death, for there was never king nor lord falslier nor traitorlier slain than I am here to my death. Thus was the complaint of our King Hermance. Now, said Sir Ebel, ye know all how our lord was betrayed, we require you for God's sake have pity upon his death, and worshipfully revenge his death, and then

The letter in the dead king's hand

Palomides goes to seek the two brothers

may ye weld all these lands. For we all wit well that an ye may slay these two traitors, the Red City and all those that be therein will take you for their lord. Truly, said Sir Palomides, it grieveth my heart for to hear you tell this doleful tale; and to say the truth I saw the same letter that ye speak of, and one of the best knights on the earth read that letter to me, and by his commandment I came hither to revenge your king's death; and therefore have done, and let me wit where I shall find those traitors, for I shall never be at ease in my heart till I be in hands with them. Sir, said Sir Ebel, then take your ship again, and that ship must bring you unto the Delectable Isle, fast by the Red City, and we in this castle shall pray for you, and abide your again-coming. For this same castle, an ye speed well, must needs be yours; for our King Hermance let make this castle for the love of the two traitors, and so we kept it with strong hand, and therefore full sore are we threated. Wot ye what ye shall do, said Sir Palomides; whatsomever come of me, look ye keep well this castle. For an it misfortune me so to be slain in this quest I am sure there will come one of the best knights of the world for to revenge my death, and that is Sir Tristram de Liones, or else Sir Launcelot du Lake. Then Sir Palomides departed from that castle. And as he came nigh the city, there came out of a ship a goodly knight armed against him, with his shield on his shoulder, and his hand upon his sword. And anon as he came nigh Sir

He fights for to have the battle

Palomides he said: Sir knight, what seek ye here? leave this quest for it is mine, and mine it was or ever it was yours, and therefore I will have it. Sir knight, said Palomides, it may well be that this quest was yours or it was mine, but when the letter was taken out of the dead king's hand, at that time by likelihood there was no knight had undertaken to revenge the death of the king. And so at that time I promised to revenge his death, and so I shall or else I am ashamed. Ye say well, said the knight, but wit ye well then will I fight with you, and who be the better knight of us both, let him take the battle upon hand. I assent me, said Sir Palomides. And then they dressed their shields, and pulled out their swords, and lashed together many sad strokes as men of might; and this fighting was more than an hour, but at the last Sir Palomides waxed big and better winded, so that then he smote that knight such a stroke that he made him to kneel upon his knees. Then that knight spake on high and said: Gentle knight, hold thy hand. Sir Palomides was goodly and withdrew his hand. Then this knight said: Wit ye well, knight, that thou art better worthy to have this battle than I, and require thee of knighthood tell me thy name. Sir, my name is Palomides, a knight of King Arthur's, and of the Table Round, that hither I came to revenge the death of this dead king.

He arrives at the Delectable Isle

CHAPTER LXIII. Of the preparation of Sir Palomides and the two brethren that should fight with him. Well be ye found, said the knight to Palomides, for of all knights that be a-live, except three, I had liefest have you. The first is Sir Launcelot du Lake, and Sir Tristram de Liones, the third is my nigh cousin, Sir Lamorak de Galis. And I am brother unto King Hermance that is dead, and my name is Sir Hermind. Ye say well, said Sir Palomides, and ye shall see how I shall speed; and if I be there slain go ye to my lord Sir Launcelot, or else to my lord Sir Tristram, and pray them to revenge my death, for as for Sir Lamorak him shall ye never see in this world. Alas, said Sir Hermind, how may that be? He is slain, said Sir Palomides, by Sir Gawaine and his brethren. So God me help, said Hermind, there was not one for one that slew him. That is truth, said Sir Palomides, for they were four dangerous knights that slew him, as Sir Gawaine, Sir Agravaine, Sir Gaheris, and Sir Mordred, but Sir Gareth, the fifth brother was away, the best knight of them all. And so Sir Palomides told Hermind all the manner, and how they slew Sir Lamorak all only by treason. So Sir Palomides took his ship, and arrived up at the Delectable Isle. And in the meanwhile Sir Hermind that was the king's brother, he arrived up at the Red City, and there he told them how there was come a knight of King Arthur's to avenge King Hermance's death: And his name is Sir Palomides, the good knight, that for the most

part he followeth the beast Glatisant. Then all the city made great joy, for mickle had they heard of Sir Palomides, and of his noble prowess. So they let ordain a messenger, and sent unto the two brethren, and bade them to make them ready, for there was a knight come that would fight with them both. So the messenger went unto them where they were at a castle there beside; and there he told them how there was a knight come of King Arthur's court to fight with them both at once. He is welcome, said they; but tell us, we pray you, if it be Sir Launcelot or any of his blood? He is none of that blood, said the messenger. Then we care the less, said the two brethren, for with none of the blood of Sir Launcelot we keep not to have ado withal. Wit ye well, said the messenger, that his name is Sir Palomides, that yet is unchristened, a noble knight. Well, said they, an he be now unchristened he shall never be christened. So they appointed to be at the city within two days. And when Sir Palomides was come to the city they made passing great joy of him, and then they beheld him, and saw that he was well made, cleanly and bigly, and unmaimed of his limbs, and neither too young nor too old. And so all the people praised him; and though he was not christened yet he believed in the best manner, and was full faithful and true of his promise, and well conditioned; and because he made his avow that he would never be christened unto the time that he had achieved the beast Glatisant, the which was a full wonderful beast,

The message to the two brothers

Helius and Helake

and a great signification; for Merlin prophesied much of that beast. And also Sir Palomides avowed never to take full christendom unto the time that he had done seven battles within the lists. So within the third day there came to the city these two brethren, the one hight Helius, the other hight Helake, the which were men of great prowess; howbeit that they were false and full of treason, and but poor men born, yet were they noble knights of their hands. And with them they brought forty knights, to that intent that they should be big enough for the Red City. Thus came the two brethren with great bobaunce and pride, for they had put the Red City in fear and damage. Then they were brought to the lists, and Sir Palomides came into the place and said thus: Be ye the two brethren, Helius and Helake, that slew your king and lord, Sir Hermance, by felony and treason, for whom that I am come hither to revenge his death? Wit thou well, said Sir Helius and Sir Helake, that we are the same knights that slew King Hermance; and wit thou well, Sir Palomides Saracen, that we shall handle thee so or thou depart that thou shalt wish that thou wert christened. It may well be, said Sir Palomides, for yet I would not die or I were christened; and yet so am I not afeard of you both, but I trust to God that I shall die a better christian man than any of you both; and doubt ye not, said Sir Palomides, either ye or I shall be left dead in this place.

CHAPTER LXIV. Of the battle between Sir Palomides and the two brethren, and how the two brethren were slain. Then they departed, and the two brethren came against Sir Palomides, and he against them, as fast as their horses might run. And by fortune Sir Palomides smote Helake through his shield and through the breast more than a fathom. All this while Sir Helius held up his spear, and for pride and orgulité he would not smite Sir Palomides with his spear; but when he saw his brother lie on the earth, and saw he might not help himself, then he said unto Sir Palomides: Help thyself. And therewith he came hurtling unto Sir Palomides with his spear, and smote him quite from his saddle. Then Sir Helius rode over Sir Palomides twice or thrice. And therewith Sir Palomides was ashamed, and gat the horse of Sir Helius by the bridle, and therewithal the horse reared, and Sir Palomides halp after, and so they fell both to the earth; but anon Sir Helius stert up lightly, and there he smote Sir Palomides a great stroke upon the helm, that he kneeled upon his own knee. Then they lashed together many sad strokes, and traced and traversed now backward, now sideling, hurtling together like two boars, and that same time they fell both grovelling to the earth. Thus they fought still without any reposing two hours, and never breathed; and then Sir Palomides waxed faint and weary, and Sir Helius waxed passing strong, and doubled his strokes, and drove Sir Palomides overthwart and endlong

Palomides fights with the two brothers

and slays them

all the field, that they of the city when they saw Sir Palomides in this case they wept and cried, and made great dole, and the other party made as great joy. Alas, said the men of the city, that this noble knight should thus be slain for our king's sake. And as they were thus weeping and crying, Sir Palomides that had suffered an hundred strokes, that it was wonder that he stood on his feet, at the last Sir Palomides beheld as he might the common people, how they wept for him; and then he said to himself: Ah, fie for shame, Sir Palomides, why hangest thou thy head so low; and therewith he bare up his shield, and looked Sir Helius in the visage, and he smote him a great stroke upon the helm, and after that another and another. And then he smote Sir Helius with such a might that he fell to the earth grovelling; and then he raced off his helm from his head, and there he smote him such a buffet that he departed his head from the body. And then were the people of the city the joyfullest people that might be. So they brought him to his lodging with great solemnity, and there all the people became his men. And then Sir Palomides prayed them all to take keep unto all the lordship of King Hermance: For, fair sirs, wit ye well I may not as at this time abide with you, for I must in all haste be with my lord King Arthur at the Castle of Lonazep, the which I have promised. Then was the people full heavy at his departing, for all that city proffered Sir Palomides the third part of their goods

so that he would abide with them; but in no wise as at that time he would not abide. And so Sir Palomides departed, and so he came unto the castle thereas Sir Ebel was lieutenant. And when they in the castle wist how Sir Palomides had sped, there was a joyful meiny; and so Sir Palomides departed, and came to the castle of Lonazep. And when he wist that Sir Tristram was not there he took his way over Humber, and came unto Joyous Gard, whereas Sir Tristram was and La Beale Isoud. Sir Tristram had commanded that what knight errant came within the Joyous Gard, as in the town, that they should warn Sir Tristram. So there came a man of the town, and told Sir Tristram how there was a knight in the town, a passing goodly man. What manner of man is he, said Sir Tristram, and what sign beareth he? So the man told Sir Tristram all the tokens of him. That is Palomides, said Dinadan. It may well be, said Sir Tristram. Go ye to him, said Sir Tristram unto Dinadan. So Dinadan went unto Sir Palomides, and there either made of other great joy, and so they lay together that night. And on the morn early came Sir Tristram and Sir Gareth, and took them in their beds, and so they arose and brake their fast.

He comes to Joyous Gard

CHAPTER LXV. How Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides met Breuse Saunce Pité, and how Sir Tristram and La Beale Isoud went unto Lonazep. And then Sir Tristram desired Sir Palomides to ride into the fields

Tristram and Palomides overthrow a knight

and woods. So they were accorded to repose them in the forest. And when they had played them a great while they rode unto a fair well; and anon they were ware of an armed knight that came riding against them, and there either saluted other. Then this armed knight spake to Sir Tristram, and asked what were these knights that were lodged in Joyous Gard. I wot not what they are, said Sir Tristram. What knights be ye? said that knight, for meseemeth ye be no knights errant, because ye ride unarmed. Whether we be knights or not we list not to tell thee our name. Wilt thou not tell me thy name? said that knight; then keep thee, for thou shalt die of my hands. And therewith he got his spear in his hands, and would have run Sir Tristram through. That saw Sir Palomides, and smote his horse traverse in middes of the side, that man and horse fell to the earth. And therewith Sir Palomides alit and pulled out his sword to have slain him. Let be, said Sir Tristram, slay him not, the knight is but a fool, it were shame to slay him. But take away his spear, said Sir Tristram, and let him take his horse and go where that he will. So when this knight arose he groaned sore of the fall, and so he took his horse, and when he was up he turned then his horse, and required Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides to tell him what knights they were. Now wit ye well, said Sir Tristram, that my name is Sir Tristram de Liones, and this knight's name is Sir Palomides. When he wist what they were he took his horse with

the spurs, because they should not ask him his name, and so rode fast away through thick and thin. Then came there by them a knight with a bended shield of azure, whose name was Epinogris, and he came toward them a great wallop. Whither are ye riding? said Sir Tristram. My fair lords, said Epinogris, I follow the falsest knight that beareth the life; wherefore I require you tell me whether ye saw him, for he beareth a shield with a case of red over it. So God me help, said Tristram, such a knight departed from us not a quarter of an hour agone; we pray you tell us his name. Alas, said Epinogris, why let ye him escape from you? and he is so great a foe unto all errant knights: his name is Breuse Saunce Pité. Ah, fie for shame, said Sir Palomides, alas that ever he escaped mine hands, for he is the man in the world that I hate most. Then every knight made great sorrow to other; and so Epinogris departed and followed the chase after him. Then Sir Tristram and his three fellows rode unto Joyous Gard; and there Sir Tristram talked unto Sir Palomides of his battle, how he sped at the Red City, and as ye have heard afore so was it ended. Truly, said Sir Tristram, I am glad ye have well sped, for ye have done worshipfully. Well, said Sir Tristram, we must forward to-morn. And then he devised how it should be; and Sir Tristram devised to send his two pavilions to set them fast by the well of Lonazep, and therein shall be the Queen La Beale Isoud. It is well said, said

who gallops away

They ride towards Lonazep

Sir Dinadan, but when Sir Palomides heard of that his heart was ravished out of measure: notwithstanding he said but little. So when they came to Joyous Gard Sir Palomides would not have gone into the castle, but as Sir Tristram took him by the finger, and led him into the castle. And when Sir Palomides saw La Beale Isoud he was ravished so that he might unnethe speak. So they went unto meat, but Palomides might not eat, and there was all the cheer that might be had. And on the morn they were apparelled to ride toward Lonazep. So Sir Tristram had three squires, and La Beale Isoud had three gentlewomen, and both the Queen and they were richly apparelled; and other people had they none with them, but varlets to bear their shields and their spears. And thus they rode forth. So as they rode they saw afore them a rout of knights; it was the knight Galihodin with twenty knights with him. Fair fellows, said Galihodin, yonder come four knights, and a rich and a well fair lady: I am in will to take that lady from them. That is not of the best counsel, said one of Galihodin's men, but send ye to them and wit what they will say; and so it was done. There came a squire unto Sir Tristram, and asked them whether they would joust or else to lose their lady. Not so, said Sir Tristram, tell your lord I bid him come as many as we be, and win her and take her. Sir, said Palomides, an it please you let me have this deed, and I shall undertake them all four. I will that

ye have it, said Sir Tristram, at your pleasure. Now go and tell your lord Galihodin, that this same knight will encounter with him and his fellows.

Palomides jousts with Galihodin

CHAPTER LXVI. How Sir Palomides jousted with Sir Galihodin, and after with Sir Gawaine, and smote them down. Then this squire departed and told Galihodin; and then he dressed his shield, and put forth a spear, and Sir Palomides another; and there Sir Palomides smote Galihodin so hard that he smote both horse and man to the earth. And there he had an horrible fall. And then came there another knight, and in the same wise he served him; and so he served the third and the fourth, that he smote them over their horses' croups, and always Sir Palomides' spear was whole. Then came six knights more of Galihodin's men, and would have been avenged upon Sir Palomides. Let be, said Sir Galihodin, not so hardy, none of you all meddle with this knight, for he is a man of great bounté and honour, and if he would ye were not able to meddle with him. And right so they held them still. And ever Sir Palomides was ready to joust; and when he saw they would no more he rode unto Sir Tristram. Right well have ye done, said Sir Tristram, and worshipfully have ye done as a good knight should. This Galihodin was nigh cousin unto Galahalt, the haut prince; and this Galihodin was a king within the country of Surluse. So as Sir Tristram, Sir

and with Gawaine and other knights

Palomides, and La Beale Isoud rode together they saw afore them four knights, and every man had his spear in his hand: the first was Sir Gawaine, the second Sir Uwaine, the third Sir Sagramore le Desirous, and the fourth was Dodinas le Savage. When Sir Palomides beheld them, that the four knights were ready to joust, he prayed Sir Tristram to give him leave to have ado with them all so long as he might hold him on horseback. And if that I be smitten down I pray you revenge me. Well, said Sir Tristram, I will as ye will, and ye are not so fain to have worship but I would as fain increase your worship. And therewithal Sir Gawaine put forth his spear, and Sir Palomides another; and so they came so eagerly together that Sir Palomides smote Sir Gawaine to the earth, horse and all; and in the same wise he served Uwaine, Sir Dodinas, and Sagramore. All these four knights Sir Palomides smote down with divers spears. And then Sir Tristram departed toward Lonazep. And when they were departed then came thither Galihodin with his ten knights unto Sir Gawaine, and there he told him all how he had sped. I marvel, said Sir Gawaine, what knights they be, that are so arrayed in green. And that knight upon the white horse smote me down, said Galihodin, and my three fellows. And so he did to me, said Gawaine; and well I wot, said Sir Gawaine, that either he upon the white horse is Sir Tristram or else Sir Palomides, and that gay beseen lady is Queen Isoud. Thus

they talked of one thing and of other. And in the meanwhile Sir Tristram passed on till that he came to the well where his two pavilions were set; and there they alighted, and there they saw many pavilions and great array. Then Sir Tristram left there Sir Palomides and Sir Gareth with La Beale Isoud, and Sir Tristram and Sir Dinadan rode to Lonazep to hearken tidings; and Sir Tristram rode upon Sir Palomides' white horse. And when he came into the castle Sir Dinadan heard a great horn blow, and to the horn drew many knights. Then Sir Tristram asked a knight: What meaneth the blast of that horn? Sir, said that knight, it is all those that shall hold against King Arthur at this tournament. The first is the king of Ireland, and the king of Surluse, the king of Listinoise, the king of Northumberland, and the king of the best part of Wales, with many other countries. And these draw them to a council, to understand what governance they shall be of; but the King of Ireland, whose name was Marhalt, and father to the good knight Sir Marhaus that Sir Tristram slew, had all the speech that Sir Tristram might hear it. He said: Lords and fellows, let us look to ourself, for wit ye well King Arthur is sure of many good knights, or else he would not with so few knights have ado with us; therefore by my counsel let every king have a standard and a cognisance by himself, that every knight draw to their natural lord, and then may every king and captain help his knights if they have need.

Tristram hearkens tidings

Tristram rides to Arthur

When Sir Tristram had heard all their counsel he rode unto King Arthur for to hear of his counsel.

CHAPTER LXVII. How Sir Tristram and his fellowship came into the tournament of Lonazep; and of divers jousts and matters. But Sir Tristram was not so soon come into the place, but Sir Gawaine and Sir Galihodin went to King Arthur, and told him: That same green knight in the green harness with the white horse smote us two down, and six of our fellows this same day. Well, said Arthur. And then he called Sir Tristram and asked him what was his name. Sir, said Sir Tristram, ye shall hold me excused as at this time, for ye shall not wit my name. And there Sir Tristram returned and rode his way. I have marvel, said Arthur, that yonder knight will not tell me his name, but go thou, Griflet le Fise de Dieu, and pray him to speak with me betwixt us. Then Sir Griflet rode after him and overtook him, and said him that King Arthur prayed him for to speak with him secretly apart. Upon this covenant, said Sir Tristram, I will speak with him; that I will turn again so that ye will ensure me not to desire to hear my name. I shall undertake, said Sir Griflet, that he will not greatly desire it of you. So they rode together until they came to King Arthur. Fair sir, said King Arthur, what is the cause ye will not tell me your name? Sir, said Sir Tristram, without a cause I will not hide my name. Upon

what party will ye hold? said King Arthur. Truly, my lord, said Sir Tristram, I wot not yet on what party I will be on, until I come to the field, and thereas my heart giveth me, there will I hold; but to-morrow ye shall see and prove on what party I shall come. And therewithal he returned and went to his pavilions. And upon the morn they armed them all in green, and came into the field; and there young knights began to joust, and did many worshipful deeds. Then spake Gareth unto Sir Tristram, and prayed him to give him leave to break his spear, for him thought shame to bear his spear whole again. When Sir Tristram heard him say so he laughed, and said: I pray you do your best. Then Sir Gareth gat a spear and proffered to joust. That saw a knight that was nephew unto the King of the hundred knights; his name was Selises, and a good man of arms. So this knight Selises then dressed him unto Sir Gareth, and they two met together so hard that either smote other down, horse and all, to the earth, so they were both bruised and hurt; and there they lay till the King with the hundred knights halp Selises up, and Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides halp up Gareth again. And so they rode with Sir Gareth unto their pavilions, and then they pulled off his helm. And when La Beale Isoud saw Sir Gareth bruised in the face she asked him what ailed him. Madam, said Sir Gareth, I had a great buffet, and as I suppose I gave another, but none of my fellows, God thank them, would not rescue me. For-

Gareth jousts with Selises

Tristram at the jousts

sooth, said Palomides, it longed not to none of us as this day to joust, for there have not this day jousted no proved knights, and needly ye would joust. And when the other party saw ye proffered yourself to joust they sent one to you, a passing good knight of his age, for I know him well, his name is Selises; and worshipfully ye met with him, and neither of you are dishonoured, and therefore refresh yourself that ye may be ready and whole to joust to-morrow. As for that, said Gareth, I shall not fail you an I may bestride mine horse.

CHAPTER LXVIII. How Sir Tristram and his fellowship jousted, and of the noble feats that they did in that tourneying. Now upon what party, said Tristram, is it best we be withal as to-morn? Sir, said Palomides, ye shall have mine advice to be against King Arthur as to-morn, for on his party will be Sir Launcelot and many good knights of his blood with him. And the more men of worship that they be, the more worship we shall win. That is full knightly spoken, said Sir Tristram; and right so as ye counsel me, so will we do. In the name of God, said they all. So that night they were lodged with the best. And on the morn when it was day they were arrayed all in green trappours, shields and spears, and La Beale Isoud in the same colour, and her three damosels. And right so these four knights came into the field endlong and through. And so they led La Beale Isoud thither as she should stand and behold all the

jousts in a bay window; but always she was wimpled that no man must see her visage. And then these three knights rode straight unto the party of the king of Scots. When King Arthur had seen them do all this he asked Sir Launcelot what were these knights and that queen. Sir, said Launcelot, I cannot say you in certain, but if Sir Tristram be in this country, or Sir Palomides, wit ye well it be they in certain, and La Beale Isoud. Then Arthur called to him Sir Kay and said: Go lightly and wit how many knights there be here lacking of the Table Round, for by the sieges thou mayest know. So went Sir Kay and saw by the writings in the sieges that there lacked ten knights, and these be their names that be not here. Sir Tristram, Sir Palomides, Sir Percivale, Sir Gaheris, Sir Epinogris, Sir Mordred, Sir Dinadan, Sir La Cote Male Taile, and Sir Pelleas the noble knight. Well, said Arthur, some of these I dare undertake are here this day against us. Then came therein two brethren, cousins unto Sir Gawaine, the one hight Sir Edward, that other hight Sir Sadok, the which were two good knights; and they asked of King Arthur that they might have the first jousts, for they were of Orkney. I am pleased, said King Arthur. Then Sir Edward encountered with the king of Scots, in whose party was Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides; and Sir Edward smote the king of Scots quite from his horse, and Sir Sadok smote down the king of North Wales, and gave him a wonder great fall, that there was a great

The green knights

Palomides at the jousts

cry on King Arthur's party, and that made Sir Palomides passing wroth. And so Sir Palomides dressed his shield and his spear, and with all his might he met with Sir Edward of Orkney, that he smote him so hard that his horse might not stand on his feet, and so they hurtled to the earth; and then with the same spear Sir Palomides smote down Sir Sadok over his horse's croup. O Jesu, said Arthur, what knight is that arrayed all in green? he jousted mightily. Wit you well, said Sir Gawaine, he is a good knight, and yet shall ye see him joust better or he depart. And yet shall ye see, said Sir Gawaine, another bigger knight, in the same colour, than he is; for that same knight, said Sir Gawaine, that smote down right now my four cousins, he smote me down within these two days, and seven fellows more. This meanwhile as they stood thus talking there came into the place Sir Tristram upon a black horse, and or ever he stint he smote down with one spear four good knights of Orkney that were of the kin of Sir Gawaine; and Sir Gareth and Sir Dinadan every each of them smote down a good knight. Jesu, said Arthur, yonder knight upon the black horse doth mightily and marvellously well. Abide you, said Sir Gawaine; that knight with the black horse began not yet. Then Sir Tristram made to horse again the two kings that Edward and Sadok had unhorsed at the beginning. And then Sir Tristram drew his sword and rode into the thickest of the press against them of Orkney; and there he smote down knights, and

rashed off helms, and pulled away their shields, and hurtled down many knights: he fared so that Sir Arthur and all knights had great marvel when they saw one knight do so great deeds of arms. And Sir Palomides failed not upon the other side, but did so marvellously well that all men had wonder. For there King Arthur likened Sir Tristram that was on the black horse like to a wood lion, and likened Sir Palomides upon the white horse unto a wood leopard, and Sir Gareth and Sir Dinadan unto eager wolves. But the custom was such among them that none of the kings would help other, but all the fellowship of every standard to help other as they might; but ever Sir Tristram did so much deeds of arms that they of Orkney waxed weary of him, and so withdrew them unto Lonazep.

Tristram's feats of arms

CHAPTER LXIX. How Sir Tristram was unhorsed and smitten down by Sir Launcelot, and after that Sir Tristram smote down King Arthur. Then was the cry of heralds and all manner of common people: The green knight hath done marvellously, and beaten all them of Orkney. And there the heralds numbered that Sir Tristram that sat upon the black horse had smitten down with spears and swords thirty knights; and Sir Palomides had smitten down twenty knights, and the most part of these fifty knights were of the house of King Arthur, and proved knights. So God me help, said Arthur unto Sir Launcelot, this is a great shame to us to see four knights beat so many knights of

Launcelot encounters against Tristram

mine; and therefore make you ready, for we will have ado with them. Sir, said Launcelot, wit ye well that there are two passing good knights, and great worship were it not to us now to have ado with them, for they have this day sore travailed. As for that, said Arthur, I will be avenged; and therefore take with you Sir Bleoberis and Sir Ector, and I will be the fourth, said Arthur. Sir, said Launcelot, ye shall find me ready, and my brother Sir Ector, and my cousin Sir Bleoberis. And so when they were ready and on horseback: Now choose, said Sir Arthur unto Sir Launcelot, with whom that ye will encounter withal. Sir, said Launcelot, I will meet with the green knight upon the black horse, that was Sir Tristram; and my cousin Sir Bleoberis shall match the green knight upon the white horse, that was Sir Palomides; and my brother Sir Ector shall match with the green knight upon the white horse, that was Sir Gareth. Then must I, said Sir Arthur, have ado with the green knight upon the grisled horse, and that was Sir Dinadan. Now every man take heed to his fellow, said Sir Launcelot. And so they trotted on together, and there encountered Sir Launcelot against Sir Tristram. So Sir Launcelot smote Sir Tristram so sore upon the shield that he bare horse and man to the earth; but Sir Launcelot weened that it had been Sir Palomides, and so he passed forth. And then Sir Bleoberis encountered with Sir Palomides, and he smote him so hard upon the shield that Sir Palomides and his white horse rustled to

Tristram meets with Arthur

the earth. Then Sir Ector de Maris smote Sir Gareth so hard that down he fell off his horse. And the noble King Arthur encountered with Sir Dinadan, and he smote him quite from his saddle. And then the noise turned awhile how the green knights were slain down. When the King of Northgalis saw that Sir Tristram had a fall, then he remembered him how great deeds of arms Sir Tristram had done. Then he made ready many knights, for the custom and cry was such, that what knight were smitten down, and might not be horsed again by his fellows outher by his own strength, that as that day he should be prisoner unto the party that had smitten him down. So came in the King of Northgalis, and he rode straight unto Sir Tristram; and when he came nigh him he alit down suddenly and betook Sir Tristram his horse, and said thus: Noble knight, I know thee not of what country that thou art, but for the noble deeds that thou hast done this day take there my horse, and let me do as well as I may; for as Jesu me help thou art better worthy to have mine horse than I myself. Gramercy, said Sir Tristram, and if I may I shall quite you: look that ye go not far from us, and as I suppose, I shall win you another horse. And therewith Sir Tristram mounted upon his horse, and there he met with King Arthur, and he gave him such a buffet upon the helm with his sword that King Arthur had no power to keep his saddle. And then Sir Tristram gave the King of Northgalis King Arthur's horse: then was there great press

Tristram disguised

about King Arthur for to horse him again; but Sir Palomides would not suffer King Arthur to be horsed again, but ever Sir Palomides smote on the right hand and on the left hand mightily as a noble knight. And this meanwhile Sir Tristram rode through the thickest of the press, and smote down knights on the right hand and on the left hand, and raced off helms, and so passed forth unto his pavilions, and left Sir Palomides on foot; and Sir Tristram changed his horse and disguised himself all in red, horse and harness.

CHAPTER LXX. How Sir Tristram changed his harness and it was all red, and how he demeaned him, and how Sir Palomides slew Launcelot's horse. And when the Queen La Beale Isoud saw that Sir Tristram was unhorsed, and she wist not where he was, then she wept greatly. But Sir Tristram when he was ready came dashing lightly into the field, and then La Beale Isoud espied him. And so he did great deeds of arms; with one spear that was great Sir Tristram smote down five knights or ever he stint. Then Sir Launcelot espied him readily, that it was Sir Tristram, and then he repented him that he had smitten him down; and so Sir Launcelot went out of the press to repose him and lightly he came again. And now when Sir Tristram came into the press, through his great force he put Sir Palomides upon his horse, and Sir Gareth, and Sir Dinadan, and then they began to do marvellously; but Sir Palomides nor

none of his two fellows knew not who had holpen them on horseback again. But ever Sir Tristram was nigh them and succoured them, and they not him, because he was changed into red armour: and all this while Sir Launcelot was away. So when La Beale Isoud knew Sir Tristram again upon his horse-back she was passing glad, and then she laughed and made good cheer. And as it happened, Sir Palomides looked up toward her where she lay in the window, and he espied how she laughed; and therewith he took such a rejoicing that he smote down, what with his spear and with his sword, all that ever he met; for through the sight of her he was so enamoured in her love that he seemed at that time, that an both Sir Tristram and Sir Launcelot had been both against him they should have won no worship of him; and in his heart, as the book saith, Sir Palomides wished that with his worship he might have ado with Sir Tristram before all men, because of La Beale Isoud. Then Sir Palomides began to double his strength, and he did so marvellously that all men had wonder of him, and ever he cast up his eye unto La Beale Isoud. And when he saw her make such cheer he fared like a lion, that there might no man withstand him; and then Sir Tristram beheld him, how that Sir Palomides bestirred him; and then he said unto Sir Dinadan: So God me help, Sir Palomides is a passing good knight and a well enduring, but such deeds saw I him never do, nor never heard I tell that ever he did so much in one day. It is his day, said Dinadan; and

Palomides' feats of arms

He overthrows Sir Launcelot

he would say no more unto Sir Tristram; but to himself he said: An if ye knew for whose love he doth all those deeds of arms, soon would Sir Tristram abate his courage. Alas, said Sir Tristram, that Sir Palomides is not christened. So said King Arthur, and so said all those that beheld him. Then all people gave him the prize, as for the best knight that day, that he passed Sir Launcelot outher Sir Tristram. Well, said Dinadan to himself, all this worship that Sir Palomides hath here this day he may thank the Queen Isoud, for had she been away this day Sir Palomides had not gotten the prize this day. Right so came into the field Sir Launcelot du Lake, and saw and heard the noise and cry and the great worship that Sir Palomides had. He dressed him against Sir Palomides, with a great mighty spear and a long, and thought to smite him down. And when Sir Palomides saw Sir Launcelot come upon him so fast, he ran upon Sir Launcelot as fast with his sword as he might; and as Sir Launcelot should have stricken him he smote his spear a-side, and smote it a-two with his sword. And Sir Palomides rushed unto Sir Launcelot, and thought to have put him to a shame; and with his sword he smote his horse's neck that Sir Launcelot rode upon, and then Sir Launcelot fell to the earth. Then was the cry huge and great: See how Sir Palomides the Saracen hath smitten down Sir Launcelot's horse. Right then were there many knights wroth with Sir Palomides because he had done that deed; therefore many

knights held there against that it was unknightly done in a tournament to kill an horse wilfully, but that it had been done in plain battle, life for life.

and slays his horse

CHAPTER LXXI. How Sir Launcelot said to Sir Palomides, and how the prize of that day was given unto Sir Palomides.

When Sir Ector de Maris saw Sir Launcelot his brother have such a despite, and so set on foot, then he gat a spear eagerly, and ran against Sir Palomides, and he smote him so hard that he bare him quite from his horse. That saw Sir Tristram, that was in red harness, and he smote down Sir Ector de Maris quite from his horse. Then Sir Launcelot dressed his shield upon his shoulder, and with his sword naked in his hand, and so came straight upon Sir Palomides fiercely and said: Wit thou well thou hast done me this day the greatest despite that ever any worshipful knight did to me in tournament or in jousts, and therefore I will be avenged upon thee, therefore take keep to yourself. Have mercy, noble knight, said Palomides, and forgive me mine unkindly deeds, for I have no power nor might to withstand you, and I have done so much this day that well I wot I did never so much, nor never shall in my life days; and therefore, most noble knight, I require thee spare me as at this day, and I promise you I shall ever be your knight while I live: an ye put me from my worship now, ye put me from the greatest worship that ever I had or ever shall have in

Launcelot's deeds of arms

my life-days. Well, said Sir Launcelot, I see, for to say thee sooth, ye have done marvellously well this day; and I understand a part for whose love ye do it, and well I wot that love is a great mistress. An if my lady were here as she nis not, wit you well, said Sir Launcelot, ye should not bear away the worship. But beware your love be not discovered, for an Sir Tristram may know it ye will repent it; and sithen my quarrel is not here, ye shall have this day the worship as for me; considering the great travail and pain that ye have had this day, it were no worship for me to put you from it. And therewithal Sir Launcelot suffered Sir Palomides to depart. Then Sir Launcelot by great force and might gat his own horse maugre twenty knights. So when Sir Launcelot was horsed he did many marvels, and so did Sir Tristram, and Sir Palomides in like wise. Then Sir Launcelot smote down with a spear Sir Dinadan, and the king of Scotland, and the king of Wales, and the king of Northumberland, and the king of Listinoise. So then Sir Launcelot and his fellows smote down well a forty knights. Then came the king of Ireland and the king of the Straight Marches to rescue Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides. There began a great medley, and many knights were smitten down on both parties; and always Sir Launcelot spared Sir Tristram, and he spared him. And Sir Palomides would not meddle with Sir Launcelot, and so there was hurtling here and there. And then King Arthur sent out many knights of

Palomides gains the prize

the Table Round; and Sir Palomides was ever in the foremost front, and Sir Tristram did so strongly well that the king and all other had marvel. And then the King let blow to lodging; and because Sir Palomides began first, and never he went nor rode out of the field to repose, but ever he was doing marvellously well either on foot or on horseback, and longest during, King Arthur and all the kings gave Sir Palomides the honour and the gree as for that day. Then Sir Tristram commanded Sir Dinadan to fetch the Queen La Beale Isoud, and bring her to his two pavilions that stood by the well. And so Dinadan did as he was commanded. But when Sir Palomides understood and wist that Sir Tristram was in the red armour, and on a red horse, wit ye well that he was glad, and so was Sir Gareth and Sir Dinadan, for they all weened that Sir Tristram had been taken prisoner. And then every knight drew to his inn. And then King Arthur and every knight spake of those knights; but above all men they gave Sir Palomides the prize, and all knights that knew Sir Palomides had wonder of his deeds. Sir, said Sir Launcelot unto Arthur, as for Sir Palomides an he be the green knight I dare say as for this day he is best worthy to have the degree, for he reposed him never, nor never changed his weeds, and he began first and longest held on. And yet well I wot, said Sir Launcelot, that there was a better knight than he, and that shall be proved or we depart, upon pain of my life. Thus they

The peerless knight

talked on either party; and so Sir Dinadan railed with Sir Tristram and said: What the devil is upon thee this day? for Sir Palomides' strength feebled never this day, but ever he doubled his strength.

CHAPTER LXXII. How Sir Dinadan provoked Sir Tristram to do well. And thou, Sir Tristram, farest all this day as though thou hadst been asleep, and therefore I call thee coward. Well, Dinadan, said Sir Tristram, I was never called coward or now of no earthly knight in my life; and wit thou well, sir, I call myself never the more coward though Sir Launcelot gave me a fall, for I outcept him of all knights. And doubt ye not Sir Dinadan, an Sir Launcelot have a quarrel good, he is too over good for any knight that now is living; and yet of his sufferance, largess, bounty, and courtesy, I call him knight peerless: and so Sir Tristram was in manner wroth with Sir Dinadan. But all this language Sir Dinadan said because he would anger Sir Tristram, for to cause him to awake his spirits and to be wroth; for well knew Sir Dinadan that an Sir Tristram were thoroughly wroth Sir Palomides should not get the prize upon the morn. And for this intent Sir Dinadan said all this railing and language against Sir Tristram. Truly, said Sir Palomides, as for Sir Launcelot, of his noble knighthood, courtesy, and prowess, and gentleness, I know not his peer; for this day, said Sir Palomides, I did full uncourteously unto Sir Launcelot, and full

unknightly, and full knightly and courteously he did to me again; for an he had been as ungentle to me as I was to him, this day I had won no worship. And therefore, said Palomides, I shall be Sir Launcelot's knight while my life lasteth. This talking was in the houses of kings. But all kings, lords, and knights, said, of clear knighthood, and of pure strength, of bounty, of courtesy, Sir Launcelot and Sir Tristram bare the prize above all knights that ever were in Arthur's days. And there were never knights in Arthur's days did half so many deeds as they did; as the book saith, no ten knights did not half the deeds that they did, and there was never knight in their days that required Sir Launcelot or Sir Tristram of any quest, so it were not to their shame, but they performed their desire.

Arthur comes to see Isoud

CHAPTER LXXIII. How King Arthur and Sir Launcelot came to see La Beale Isoud, and how Palomides smote down King Arthur. So on the morn Sir Launcelot departed, and Sir Tristram was ready, and La Beale Isoud with Sir Palomides and Sir Gareth. And so they rode all in green full freshly beseen unto the forest. And Sir Tristram left Sir Dinadan sleeping in his bed. And so as they rode it happed the King and Launcelot stood in a window, and saw Sir Tristram ride and Isoud. Sir, said Launcelot, yonder rideth the fairest lady of the world except your Queen, Dame Guenever. Who is that? said Sir Arthur. Sir, said he, it is Queen Isoud that, out-taken

Palomides smites down Arthur

my lady your Queen, she is makeless. Take your horse, said Arthur, and array you at all rights as I will do, and I promise you, said the king, I will see her. Then anon they were armed and horsed, and either took a spear and rode unto the forest. Sir, said Launcelot, it is not good that ye go too nigh them, for wit ye well there are two as good knights as now are living, and therefore, sir, I pray you be not too hasty. For peradventure there will be some knights be displeased an we come suddenly upon them. As for that, said Arthur, I will see her, for I take no force whom I grieve. Sir, said Launcelot, ye put yourself in great jeopardy. As for that, said the king, we will take the adventure. Right so anon the king rode even to her, and saluted her, and said: God you save. Sir, said she, ye are welcome. Then the king beheld her, and liked her wonderly well. With that came Sir Palomides unto Arthur, and said: Uncourteous knight, what seekest thou here? thou art uncourteous to come upon a lady thus suddenly, therefore withdraw thee. Sir Arthur took none heed of Sir Palomides' words, but ever he looked still upon Queen Isoud. Then was Sir Palomides wroth, and therewith he took a spear, and came hurtling upon King Arthur, and smote him down with a spear. When Sir Launcelot saw that despite of Sir Palomides, he said to himself: I am loath to have ado with yonder knight, and not for his own sake but for Sir Tristram. And one thing I am sure of, if I smite down Sir Palomides I must have ado

with Sir Tristram, and that were overmuch for me to match them both, for they are two noble knights; notwithstanding whether I live or I die needs must I revenge my lord, and so will I whatsomever befall of me. And therewith Sir Launcelot cried to Sir Palomides: Keep thee from me. And then Sir Launcelot and Sir Palomides rushed together with two spears strongly, but Sir Launcelot smote Sir Palomides so hard that he went quite out of his saddle, and had a great fall. When Sir Tristram saw Sir Palomides have that fall, he said to Sir Launcelot: Sir knight, keep thee, for I must joust with thee. As for to joust with me, said Sir Launcelot, I will not fail you, for no dread I have of you; but I am loath to have ado with you an I might choose, for I will that ye wit that I must revenge my special lord that was unhorsed unwarly and unknightly. And therefore, though I revenged that fall, take ye no displeasure therein, for he is to me such a friend that I may not see him shamed. Anon Sir Tristram understood by his person and by his knightly words that it was Sir Launcelot du Lake, and verily Sir Tristram deemed that it was King Arthur, he that Sir Palomides had smitten down. And then Sir Tristram put his spear from him, and put Sir Palomides again on horseback, and Sir Launcelot put King Arthur on horseback and so departed. So God me help, said Sir Tristram unto Palomides, ye did not worshipfully when ye smote down that knight so suddenly as ye did. And wit ye well ye did yourself great shame, for the knights came

Launcelot revenges Arthur

Tristram reproves Palomides

hither of their gentleness to see a fair lady; and that is every good knight's part, to behold a fair lady; and ye had not ado to play such masteries afore my lady. Wit thou well it will turn to anger, for he that ye smote down was King Arthur, and that other was the good knight Sir Launcelot. But I shall not forget the words of Sir Launcelot when that he called him a man of great worship, thereby I wist that it was King Arthur. And as for Sir Launcelot, an there had been five hundred knights in the meadow, he would not have refused them, and yet he said he would refuse me. By that again I wist that it was Sir Launcelot, for ever he forbeareth me in every place, and showeth me great kindness; and of all knights, I out-take none, say what men will say, he beareth the flower of all chivalry, say it him whosomever will. An he be well angered, and that him list to do his utterance without any favour, I know him not a-live but Sir Launcelot is over hard for him, be it on horseback or on foot. I may never believe, said Palomides, that King Arthur will ride so privily as a poor errant knight. Ah, said Sir Tristram, ye know not my lord Arthur, for all knights may learn to be a knight of him. And therefore ye may be sorry, said Sir Tristram, of your unkindly deeds to so noble a king. And a thing that is done may not be undone, said Palomides. Then Sir Tristram sent Queen Isoud unto her lodging in the priory, there to behold all the tournament.

CHAPTER LXXIV. How the second day Palomides forsook Sir Tristram, and went to the contrary party against him. Then there was a cry unto all knights, that when they heard an horn blow they should make jousts as they did the first day. And like as the brethren Sir Edward and Sir Sadok began the jousts the first day, Sir Uwaine the king's son Urien and Sir Lucanere de Buttelere began the jousts the second day. And at the first encounter Sir Uwaine smote down the king's son of Scots; and Sir Lucanere ran against the king of Wales, and they brake their spears all to pieces; and they were so fierce both, that they hurtled together that both fell to the earth. Then they of Orkney horsed again Sir Lucanere. And then came in Sir Tristram de Liones; and then Sir Tristram smote down Sir Uwaine and Sir Lucanere; and Sir Palomides smote down other two knights; and Sir Gareth smote down other two knights. Then said Sir Arthur unto Sir Launcelot: See yonder three knights do passingly well, and namely the first that jousted. Sir, said Launcelot, that knight began not yet, but ye shall see him this day do marvellously. And then came into the place the duke's son of Orkney, and then they began to do many deeds of arms. When Sir Tristram saw them so begin, he said to Palomides: How feel ye yourself? may ye do this day as ye did yesterday? Nay, said Palomides, I feel myself so weary, and so sore bruised of the deeds of yesterday, that I may not endure as I did yesterday. That me repenteth, said Sir Tristram, for I

The second day of the tournament

Palomides forsakes Tristram

shall lack you this day. Sir Palomides said: Trust not to me, for I may not do as I did. All these words said Palomides for to beguile Sir Tristram. Sir, said Sir Tristram unto Sir Gareth, then must I trust upon you; wherefore I pray you be not far from me to rescue me. An need be, said Sir Gareth, I shall not fail you in all that I may do. Then Sir Palomides rode by himself; and then in despite of Sir Tristram he put himself in the thickest press among them of Orkney, and there he did so marvellously deeds of arms that all men had wonder of him, for there might none stand him a stroke. When Sir Tristram saw Sir Palomides do such deeds, he marvelled and said to himself: He is weary of my company. So Sir Tristram beheld him a great while and did but little else, for the noise and cry was so huge and great that Sir Tristram marvelled from whence came the strength that Sir Palomides had there in the field. Sir, said Sir Gareth unto Sir Tristram, remember ye not of the words that Sir Dinadan said to you yesterday, when he called you a coward; forsooth, sir, he said it for none ill, for ye are the man in the world that he most loveth, and all that he said was for your worship. And therefore, said Sir Gareth to Sir Tristram, let me know this day what ye be; and wonder ye not so upon Sir Palomides, for he enforceth himself to win all the worship and honour from you. I may well believe it, said Sir Tristram. And sithen I understand his evil will and his envy, ye shall see, if that I enforce myself, that the

noise shall be left that now is upon him. Then Sir Tristram rode into the thickest of the press, and then he did so marvellously well, and did so great deeds of arms, that all men said that Sir Tristram did double so much deeds of arms as Sir Palomides had done aforehand. And then the noise went plain from Sir Palomides, and all the people cried upon Sir Tristram. O Jesu, said the people, see how Sir Tristram smiteth down with his spear so many knights. And see, said they all, how many knights he smiteth down with his sword, and of how many knights he rashed off their helms and their shields; and so he beat them all of Orkney afore him. How now, said Sir Launcelot unto King Arthur, I told you that this day there would a knight play his pageant. Yonder rideth a knight ye may see he doth knightly, for he hath strength and wind. So God me help, said Arthur to Launcelot, ye say sooth, for I saw never a better knight, for he passeth far Sir Palomides. Sir, wit ye well, said Launcelot, it must be so of right, for it is himself, that noble knight Sir Tristram. I may right well believe it, said Arthur. But when Sir Palomides heard the noise and the cry was turned from him, he rode out on a part and beheld Sir Tristram. And when Sir Palomides saw Sir Tristram do so marvellously well he wept passingly sore for despite, for he wist well he should no worship win that day; for well knew Sir Palomides when Sir Tristram would put forth his strength and his manhood he should get but little worship that day.

Tristram surpasses Palomides

Palomides' envy of Tristram

CHAPTER LXXV. How Sir Tristram departed off the field, and awaked Sir Dinadan, and changed his array into black.

Then came King Arthur, and the king of Northgalis, and Sir Launcelot du Lake; and Sir Bleoberis, Sir Bors de Ganis, Sir Ector de Maris, these three knights came into the field with Sir Launcelot. And then Sir Launcelot with the three knights of his kin did so great deeds of arms that all the noise began upon Sir Launcelot. And so they beat the king of Wales and the king of Scots far aback, and made them to avoid the field; but Sir Tristram and Sir Gareth abode still in the field and endured all that ever there came, that all men had wonder that any knight might endure so many strokes. But ever Sir Launcelot, and his three kinsmen by the commandment of Sir Launcelot, forbare Sir Tristram. Then said Sir Arthur: Is that Sir Palomides that endureth so well? Nay, said Sir Launcelot, wit ye well it is the good knight Sir Tristram, for yonder ye may see Sir Palomides beholdeth and hoveth, and doth little or nought. And sir, ye shall understand that Sir Tristram weeneth this day to beat us all out of the field. And as for me, said Sir Launcelot, I shall not beat him, beat him whoso will. Sir, said Launcelot unto Arthur, ye may see how Sir Palomides hoveth yonder, as though he were in a dream; wit ye well he is full heavy that Tristram doth such deeds of arms. Then is he but a fool, said Arthur, for never was Sir Palomides, nor never shall

be, of such prowess as Sir Tristram. And if he have any envy at Sir Tristram, and cometh in with him upon his side he is a false knight. As the King and Sir Launcelot thus spake, Sir Tristram rode privily out of the press, that none espied him but La Beale Isoud and Sir Palomides, for they two would not let off their eyes upon Sir Tristram. And when Sir Tristram came to his pavilions he found Sir Dinadan in his bed asleep. Awake, said Tristram, ye ought to be ashamed so to sleep when knights have ado in the field. Then Sir Dinadan arose lightly and said: What will ye that I shall do? Make you ready, said Sir Tristram, to ride with me into the field. So when Sir Dinadan was armed he looked upon Sir Tristram's helm and on his shield, and when he saw so many strokes upon his helm and upon his shield he said: In good time was I thus asleep, for had I been with you I must needs for shame there have followed you; more for shame than any prowess that is in me; that I see well now by those strokes that I should have been truly beaten as I was yesterday. Leave your japes, said Sir Tristram, and come off, that we're in the field again. What, said Sir Dinadan, is your heart up? yesterday ye fared as though ye had dreamed. So then Sir Tristram was arrayed in black harness. O Jesu, said Dinadan, what aileth you this day? meseemeth ye be wilder than ye were yesterday. Then smiled Sir Tristram and said to Dinadan: Await well upon me; if

Tristram again disguised

Palomides changes his armour

ye see me overmatched look that ye be ever behind me, and I shall make you ready way by God's grace. So Sir Tristram and Sir Dinadan took their horses. All this espied Sir Palomides, both their going and their coming, and so did La Beale Isoud, for she knew Sir Tristram above all other.

CHAPTER LXXVI. How Sir Palomides changed his shield and his armour for to hurt Sir Tristram, and how Sir Launcelot did to Sir Tristram. Then when Sir Palomides saw that Sir Tristram was disguised, then he thought to do him a shame. So Sir Palomides rode to a knight that was sore wounded, that sat under a fair well from the field. Sir knight, said Sir Palomides, I pray you to lend me your armour and your shield, for mine is over-well known in this field, and that hath done me great damage; and ye shall have mine armour and my shield that is as sure as yours. I will well, said the knight, that ye have mine armour and my shield, if they may do you any avail. So Sir Palomides armed him hastily in that knight's armour and his shield that shone as any crystal or silver, and so he came riding into the field. And then there was neither Sir Tristram nor none of King Arthur's party that knew Sir Palomides. And right so as Sir Palomides was come into the field Sir Tristram smote down three knights, even in the sight of Sir Palomides. And then Sir Palomides rode against Sir Tristram, and either met other with great spears, that they brast to

He fights with Tristram

their hands. And then they dashed together with swords eagerly. Then Sir Tristram had marvel what knight he was that did battle so knightly with him. Then was Sir Tristram wroth, for he felt him passing strong, so that he deemed he might not have ado with the remnant of the knights, because of the strength of Sir Palomides. So they lashed together and gave many sad strokes together, and many knights marvelled what knight he might be that so encountered with the black knight, Sir Tristram. Full well knew La Beale Isoud that there was Sir Palomides that fought with Sir Tristram, for she espied all in her window where that she stood, as Sir Palomides changed his harness with the wounded knight. And then she began to weep so heartily for the despite of Sir Palomides that there she swooned. Then came in Sir Launcelot with the knights of Orkney. And when the other party had espied Sir Launcelot, they cried: Return, return, here cometh Sir Launcelot du Lake. So there came knights and said: Sir Launcelot, ye must needs fight with yonder knight in the black harness, that was Sir Tristram, for he hath almost overcome that good knight that fighteth with him with the silver shield, that was Sir Palomides. Then Sir Launcelot rode betwixt Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides, and Sir Launcelot said to Palomides: Sir knight, let me have the battle, for ye have need to be reposed. Sir Palomides knew Sir Launcelot well, and so did Sir Tristram, but because Sir Launcelot was far hardier knight

Launcelot fights Tristram

than himself therefore he was glad, and suffered Sir Launcelot to fight with Sir Tristram. For well wist he that Sir Launcelot knew not Sir Tristram, and there he hoped that Sir Launcelot should beat or shame Sir Tristram, whereof Sir Palomides was full fain. And so Sir Launcelot gave Sir Tristram many sad strokes, but Sir Launcelot knew not Sir Tristram, but Sir Tristram knew well Sir Launcelot. And thus they fought long together, that La Beale Isoud was well nigh out of her mind for sorrow. Then Sir Dinadan told Sir Gareth how that knight in the black harness was Sir Tristram: And this is Launcelot that fighteth with him, that must needs have the better of him, for Sir Tristram hath had too much travail this day. Then let us smite him down, said Sir Gareth. So it is better that we do, said Sir Dinadan, than Sir Tristram be shamed, for yonder hoveth the strong knight with the silver shield to fall upon Sir Tristram if need be. Then forthwithal Gareth rushed upon Sir Launcelot, and gave him a great stroke upon his helm so hard that he was astonied. And then came Sir Dinadan with a spear, and he smote Sir Launcelot such a buffet that horse and all fell to the earth. O Jesu, said Sir Tristram to Sir Gareth and Sir Dinadan, fie for shame, why did ye smite down so good a knight as he is, and namely when I had ado with him? now ye do yourself great shame, and him no disworship, for I held him reasonable hot though ye had not holpen me. Then came Sir Palomides that was disguised, and smote

Tristram and Palomides fight together

down Sir Dinadan from his horse. Then Sir Launcelot, because Sir Dinadan had smitten him aforehand, then Sir Launcelot assailed Sir Dinadan passing sore, and Sir Dinadan defended him mightily. But well understood Sir Tristram that Sir Dinadan might not endure Sir Launcelot, wherefore Sir Tristram was sorry. Then came Sir Palomides fresh upon Sir Tristram. And when Sir Tristram saw him come, he thought to deliver him at once, because that he would help Sir Dinadan, because he stood in great peril with Sir Launcelot. Then Sir Tristram hurtled unto Sir Palomides and gave him a great buffet, and then Sir Tristram gat Sir Palomides and pulled him down underneath him. And so fell Sir Tristram with him; and Sir Tristram leapt up lightly and left Sir Palomides, and went betwixt Sir Launcelot and Dinadan, and then they began to do battle together. Right so Sir Dinadan gat Sir Tristram's horse, and said on high that Sir Launcelot might hear it: My lord Sir Tristram, take your horse. And when Sir Launcelot heard him name Sir Tristram: O Jesu, said Launcelot, what have I done? I am dishonoured. Ah, my lord Sir Tristram, said Launcelot, why were ye disguised? ye have put yourself in great peril this day; but I pray you noble knight to pardon me, for an I had known you we had not done this battle. Sir, said Sir Tristram, this is not the first kindness ye showed me. So they were both horsed again. Then all the people on the one side gave Sir Launcelot the honour and the degree, and on the other side all

Tristram proved the best knight

the people gave to the noble knight Sir Tristram the honour and the degree; but Launcelot said nay thereto: For I am not worthy to have this honour, for I will report me unto all knights that Sir Tristram hath been longer in the field than I, and he hath smitten down many more knights this day than I have done. And therefore I will give Sir Tristram my voice and my name, and so I pray all my lords and fellows so to do. Then there was the whole voice of dukes and earls, barons and knights, that Sir Tristram this day is proved the best knight.

CHAPTER LXXVII. How Sir Tristram departed with La Beale Isoud, and how Palomides followed and excused him.

Then they blew unto lodging, and Queen Isoud was led unto her pavilions. But wit you well she was wroth out of measure with Sir Palomides, for she saw all his treason from the beginning to the ending. And all this while neither Sir Tristram, neither Sir Gareth nor Dinadan, knew not of the treason of Sir Palomides; but afterward ye shall hear that there befell the greatest debate betwixt Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides that might be. So when the tournament was done, Sir Tristram, Gareth, and Dinadan, rode with La Beale Isoud to these pavilions. And ever Sir Palomides rode with them in their company disguised as he was. But when Sir Tristram had espied him that he was the same knight with the shield of silver that held him so hot that day: Sir knight, said Sir Tristram, wit ye well here is none that

hath need of your fellowship, and therefore I pray you depart from us. Sir Palomides answered again as though he had not known Sir Tristram: Wit you well, sir knight, from this fellowship will I never depart, for one of the best knights of the world commanded me to be in this company, and till he discharge me of my service I will not be discharged. By that Sir Tristram knew that it was Sir Palomides. Ah, Sir Palomides, said the noble knight Sir Tristram, are ye such a knight? Ye have been named wrong, for ye have long been called a gentle knight, and as this day ye have showed me great ungentleness, for ye had almost brought me unto my death. But, as for you, I suppose I should have done well enough, but Sir Launcelot with you was overmuch; for I know no knight living but Sir Launcelot is over good for him, an he will do his uttermost. Alas, said Sir Palomides, are ye my lord Sir Tristram? Yea, sir, and that ye know well enough. By my knighthood, said Palomides, until now I knew you not; I weened that ye had been the king of Ireland, for well I wot ye bare his arms. His arms I bare, said Sir Tristram, and that will I stand by, for I won them once in a field of a full noble knight, his name was Sir Marhaus; and with great pain I won that knight, for there was none other recover, but Sir Marhaus died through false leeches; and yet was he never yielden to me. Sir, said Palomides, I weened ye had been turned upon Sir Launcelot's party, and that caused me to turn. Ye say well, said Sir Tristram, and

Palomides offers excuses

which Tristram accepts

so I take you, and I forgive you. So then they rode into their pavilions; and when they were alit they unarmed them and washed their faces and hands, and so yode unto meat, and were set at their table. But when Isoud saw Sir Palomides she changed then her colours, and for wrath she might not speak. Anon Sir Tristram espied her countenance and said: Madam, for what cause make ye us such cheer? we have been sore travailed this day. Mine own lord, said La Beale Isoud, for God's sake be ye not displeased with me, for I may none otherwise do; for I saw this day how ye were betrayed and nigh brought to your death. Truly, sir, I saw every dele, how and in what wise, and therefore, sir, how should I suffer in your presence such a felon and traitor as Sir Palomides; for I saw him with mine eyes, how he beheld you when ye went out of the field. For ever he hoved still upon his horse till he saw you come in againward. And then forthwithal I saw him ride to the hurt knight, and changed harness with him, and then straight I saw him how he rode into the field. And anon as he had found you he encountered with you, and thus wilfully Sir Palomides did battle with you; and as for him, sir, I was not greatly afraid, but I dread sore Launcelot, that knew you not. Madam, said Palomides, ye may say whatso ye will, I may not contrary you, but by my knighthood I knew not Sir Tristram. Sir Palomides, said Sir Tristram, I will take your excuse, but well I wot ye spared me but little, but all is pardoned on

my part. Then La Beale Isoud held down her head and said no more at that time.

The unknown visitors

CHAPTER LXXVIII. How King Arthur and Sir Launcelot came unto their pavilions as they sat at supper, and of Sir Palomides.

And therewithal two knights armed came unto the pavilions, and there they alit both, and came in armed at all pieces. Fair knights, said Sir Tristram, ye are to blame to come thus armed at all pieces upon me while we are at our meat; if ye would anything when we were in the field there might ye have eased your hearts. Not so, said the one of those knights, we come not for that intent, but wit ye well Sir Tristram, we be come hither as your friends. And I am come here, said the one, for to see you, and this knight is come for to see La Beale Isoud. Then said Sir Tristram: I require you do off your helms that I may see you. That will we do at your desire, said the knights. And when their helms were off, Sir Tristram thought that he should know them. Then said Sir Dinadan privily unto Sir Tristram: Sir, that is Sir Launcelot du Lake that spake unto you first, and the other is my lord King Arthur. Then, said Sir Tristram unto La Beale Isoud, Madam arise, for here is my lord, King Arthur. Then the King and the Queen kissed, and Sir Launcelot and Sir Tristram braced either other in arms, and then there was joy without measure; and at the request of La Beale Isoud, King Arthur and Launcelot were unarmed, and then there was merry talking. Madam, said Sir

They are recognised

Arthur, it is many a day sithen that I have desired to see you, for ye have been praised so far; and now I dare say ye are the fairest that ever I saw, and Sir Tristram is as fair and as good a knight as any that I know; therefore me beseemeth ye are well beset together. Sir, God thank you, said the noble knight, Sir Tristram, and Isoud; of your great goodness and largess ye are peerless. Thus they talked of many things and of all the whole jousts. But for what cause, said King Arthur, were ye, Sir Tristram, against us? Ye are a knight of the Table Round; of right ye should have been with us. Sir, said Sir Tristram, here is Dinadan, and Sir Gareth your own nephew, caused me to be against you. My lord Arthur, said Gareth, I may well bear the blame, but it were Sir Tristram's own deeds. That may I repent, said Dinadan, for this unhappy Sir Tristram brought us to this tournament, and many great buffets he caused us to have. Then the King and Launcelot laughed that they might not sit. What knight was that, said Arthur, that held you so short, this with the shield of silver? Sir, said Sir Tristram, here he sitteth at this board. What, said Arthur, was it Sir Palomides? Wit ye well it was he, said La Beale Isoud. So God me help, said Arthur, that was unknightly done of you of so good a knight, for I have heard many people call you a courteous knight. Sir, said Palomides, I knew not Sir Tristram, for he was so disguised. So God me help, said Launcelot, it may well be, for I knew not Sir Tristram; but I marvel why ye

turned on our party. That was done for the same cause, said Launcelot. As for that, said Sir Tristram, I have pardoned him, and I would be right loath to leave his fellowship, for I love right well his company: so they left off and talked of other things. And in the evening King Arthur and Sir Launcelot departed unto their lodging; but wit ye well Sir Palomides had envy heartily, for all that night he had never rest in his bed, but wailed and wept out of measure. So on the morn Sir Tristram, Gareth, and Dinadan arose early, and then they went unto Sir Palomides' chamber, and there they found him fast a-sleep, for he had all night watched, and it was seen upon his cheeks that he had wept full sore. Say nothing, said Sir Tristram, for I am sure he hath taken anger and sorrow for the rebuke that I gave to him, and La Beale Isoud.

Still of the tournament

CHAPTER LXXIX. How Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides did the next day, and how King Arthur was unhorsed. Then Sir Tristram let call Sir Palomides, and bade him make him ready, for it was time to go to the field. When they were ready they were armed, and clothed all in red, both Isoud and all they; and so they led her passing freshly through the field, into the priory where was her lodging. And then they heard three blasts blow, and every king and knight dressed him unto the field. And the first that was ready to joust was Sir Palomides and Sir Kainus le Strange, a knight of the Table Round. And so they

Tristram does wondrous deeds

two encountered together, but Sir Palomides smote Sir Kainus so hard that he smote him quite over his horse's croup. And forthwithal Sir Palomides smote down another knight, and brake then his spear, and pulled out his sword and did wonderly well. And then the noise began greatly upon Sir Palomides. Lo, said King Arthur, yonder Palomides beginneth to play his pageant. So God me help, said Arthur, he is a passing good knight. And right as they stood talking thus, in came Sir Tristram as thunder, and he encountered with Sir Kay the Seneschal, and there he smote him down quite from his horse; and with that same spear Sir Tristram smote down three knights more, and then he pulled out his sword and did marvellously. Then the noise and cry changed from Sir Palomides and turned to Sir Tristram, and all the people cried: O Tristram, O Tristram. And then was Sir Palomides clean forgotten. How now, said Launcelot unto Arthur, yonder rideth a knight that playeth his pageants. So God me help, said Arthur to Launcelot, ye shall see this day that yonder two knights shall here do this day wonders. Sir, said Launcelot, the one knight waiteth upon the other, and enforceth himself through envy to pass the noble knight Sir Tristram, and he knoweth not of the privy envy the which Sir Palomides hath to him; for all that the noble Sir Tristram doth is through clean knighthood. And then Sir Gareth and Dinadan did wonderly great deeds of arms, as two noble knights, so that King Arthur spake of them great honour and wor-

ship; and the kings and knights of Sir Tristram's side did passingly well, and held them truly together. Then Sir Arthur and Sir Launcelot took their horses and dressed them, and gat into the thickest of the press. And there Sir Tristram unknowing smote down King Arthur, and then Sir Launcelot would have rescued him, but there were so many upon Sir Launcelot that they pulled him down from his horse. And then the king of Ireland and the king of Scots with their knights did their pain to take King Arthur and Sir Launcelot prisoner. When Sir Launcelot heard them say so, he fared as it had been an hungry lion, for he fared so that no knight durst nigh him. Then came Sir Ector de Maris, and he bare a spear against Sir Palomides, and brast it upon him all to shivers. And then Sir Ector came again and gave Sir Palomides such a dash with a sword that he stooped down upon his saddle bow. And forthwithal Sir Ector pulled down Sir Palomides under his feet; and then Sir Ector de Maris gat Sir Launcelot du Lake an horse, and brought it to him, and bade him mount upon him; but Sir Palomides leapt afore and gat the horse by the bridle, and leapt into the saddle. So God me help, said Launcelot, ye are better worthy to have that horse than I. Then Sir Ector brought Sir Launcelot another horse. Gramercy, said Launcelot unto his brother. And so when he was horsed again, with one spear he smote down four knights. And then Sir Launcelot brought to King Arthur one of the best of the four horses.

He smites down King Arthur

Tristram turns to Arthur's side

Then Sir Launcelot with King Arthur and a few of his knights of Sir Launcelot's kin did marvellous deeds; for that time, as the book recordeth, Sir Launcelot smote down and pulled down thirty knights. Notwithstanding the other party held them so fast together that King Arthur and his knights were overmatched. And when Sir Tristram saw that, what labour King Arthur and his knights, and in especial the noble deeds that Sir Launcelot did with his own hands, he marvelled greatly.

CHAPTER LXXX. How Sir Tristram turned to King Arthur's side, and how Palomides would not. Then Sir Tristram called unto him Sir Palomides, Sir Gareth, and Sir Dinadan, and said thus to them: My fair fellows, wit ye well that I will turn unto King Arthur's party, for I saw never so few men do so well, and it will be shame unto us knights that be of the Round Table to see our lord King Arthur, and that noble knight Sir Launcelot, to be dishonoured. It will be well done, said Sir Gareth and Sir Dinadan. Do your best, said Palomides, for I will not change my party that I came in withal. That is for my sake, said Sir Tristram; God speed you in your journey. And so departed Sir Palomides from them. Then Sir Tristram, Gareth, and Dinadan, turned with Sir Launcelot. And then Sir Launcelot smote down the king of Ireland quite from his horse; and so Sir Launcelot smote down the king of Scots, and the king of Wales; and then Sir Arthur ran

Launcelot and Tristram gain the prize

unto Sir Palomides and smote him quite from his horse; and then Sir Tristram bare down all that he met. Sir Gareth and Sir Dinadan did there as noble knights; then all the parties began to flee. Alas, said Palomides, that ever I should see this day, for now have I lost all the worship that I won; and then Sir Palomides went his way wailing, and so withdrew him till he came to a well, and there he put his horse from him, and did off his armour, and wailed and wept like as he had been a wood man. Then many knights gave the prize to Sir Tristram, and there were many that gave the prize unto Sir Launcelot. Fair lords, said Sir Tristram, I thank you of the honour ye would give me, but I pray you heartily that ye would give your voice to Sir Launcelot, for by my faith, said Sir Tristram, I will give Sir Launcelot my voice. But Sir Launcelot would not have it, and so the prize was given betwixt them both. Then every man rode to his lodging, and Sir Bleoberis and Sir Ector rode with Sir Tristram and La Beale Isoud unto their pavilions. Then as Sir Palomides was at the well wailing and weeping, there came by him flying the kings of Wales and of Scotland, and they saw Sir Palomides in that rage. Alas, said they, that so noble a man as ye be should be in this array. And then those kings gat Sir Palomides' horse again, and made him to arm him and mount upon his horse, and so he rode with them, making great dole. So when Sir Palomides came nigh the pavilions thereas Sir Tristram

Arthur rides to Camelot

and La Beale Isoud was in, then Sir Palomides prayed the two kings to abide him there the while that he spake with Sir Tristram. And when he came to the port of the pavilions, Sir Palomides said on high: Where art thou, Sir Tristram de Liones? Sir, said Dinadan, that is Palomides. What, Sir Palomides, will ye not come in here among us? Fie on thee, traitor, said Palomides, for wit you well an it were daylight as it is night I should slay thee mine own hands. And if ever I may get thee, said Palomides, thou shalt die for this day's deed. Sir Palomides, said Sir Tristram, ye wite me with wrong, for had ye done as I did ye had won worship. But sithen ye give me so large warning I shall be well ware of you. Fie on thee, traitor, said Palomides, and therewith departed. Then on the morn Sir Tristram, Bleoberis, and Sir Ector de Maris, Sir Gareth, Sir Dinadan, what by water and what by land, they brought La Beale Isoud unto Joyous Gard, and there reposed them a seven night, and made all the mirths and disports that they could devise. And King Arthur and his knights drew unto Camelot, and Sir Palomides rode with the two kings; and ever he made the greatest dole that any man could think, for he was not all only so dolorous for the departing from La Beale Isoud, but he was a part as sorrowful to depart from the fellowship of Sir Tristram; for Sir Tristram was so kind and so gentle that when Sir Palomides remembered him thereof he might never be merry.

CHAPTER LXXXI. How Sir Bleoberis and Sir Ector reported to Queen Guenever of the beauty of La Beale Isoud. So at the seven nights' end Sir Bleoberis and Sir Ector departed from Sir Tristram and from the Queen; and these two good knights had great gifts; and Sir Gareth and Sir Dinadan abode with Sir Tristram. And when Sir Bleoberis and Sir Ector were come thereas the Queen Guenever was lodged, in a castle by the sea-side, and through the grace of God the queen was recovered of her malady, then she asked the two knights from whence they came. They said that they came from Sir Tristram and from La Beale Isoud. How doth Sir Tristram, said the Queen, and La Beale Isoud? Truly, said those two knights, he doth as a noble knight should do; and as for the Queen Isoud, she is peerless of all ladies; for to speak of her beauty, bounté, and mirth, and of her goodness, we saw never her match as far as we have ridden and gone. O mercy Jesu, said Queen Guenever, so saith all the people that have seen her and spoken with her. God would that I had part of her conditions; and it is misfortuned me of my sickness while that tournament endured. And as I suppose I shall never see in all my life such an assembly of knights and ladies as ye have done. Then the knights told her how Palomides won the degree at the first day with great noblesse; and the second day Sir Tristram won the degree; and the third day Sir Launcelot won the degree. Well, said Queen Guen-

The report to Queen Guenever

The wounded knight

ever, who did best all these three days? So God me help, said these knights, Sir Launcelot and Sir Tristram had least dishonour. And wit ye well Sir Palomides did passing well and mightily; but he turned against the party that he came in withal, and that caused him to lose a great part of his worship, for it seemed that Sir Palomides is passing envious. Then shall he never win worship, said Queen Guenever, for an it happeth an envious man once to win worship he shall be dishonoured twice therefore; and for this cause all men of worship hate an envious man, and will shew him no favour, and he that is courteous, and kind, and gentle, hath favour in every place.

CHAPTER LXXXII. How Epinogris complained by a well, and how Sir Palomides came and found him, and of their both sorrowing. Now leave we off this matter and speak we of Sir Palomides, that rode and lodged him with the two kings, whereof the kings were heavy. Then the King of Ireland sent a man of his to Sir Palomides, and gave him a great courser, and the King of Scotland gave him great gifts; and fain they would have had Sir Palomides to have abiden with them, but in no wise he would abide; and so he departed, and rode as adventures would guide him, till it was nigh noon. And then in a forest by a well Sir Palomides saw where lay a fair wounded knight and his horse bounden by him; and that knight made the greatest dole that ever he heard man make, for ever

he wept, and therewith he sighed as though he would die. Then Sir Palomides rode near him and saluted him mildly and said: Fair knight, why wail ye so? let me lie down and wail with you, for doubt not I am much more heavier than ye are; for I dare say, said Palomides, that my sorrow is an hundred fold more than yours is, and therefore let us complain either to other. First, said the wounded knight, I require you tell me your name, for an thou be none of the noble knights of the Round Table thou shalt never know my name, whatsomever come of me. Fair knight, said Palomides, such as I am, be it better or be it worse, wit thou well that my name is Sir Palomides, son and heir unto King Astlabor, and Sir Safere and Sir Segwarides are my two brethren; and wit thou well as for myself I was never christened, but my two brethren are truly christened. O noble knight, said that knight, well is me that I have met with you; and wit ye well my name is Epinogris, the King's son of Northumberland. Now sit down, said Epinogris, and let us either complain to other. Then Sir Palomides began his complaint. Now shall I tell you, said Palomides, what woe I endure. I love the fairest queen and lady that ever bare life, and wit ye well her name is La Beale Isoud, King Mark's wife of Cornwall. That is great folly, said Epinogris, for to love Queen Isoud, for one of the best knights of the world loveth her, that is Sir Tristram de Liones. That is truth, said Palomides, for no man knoweth that matter better than I do, for I

The two knights make great dole

Palomides makes his wail

have been in Sir Tristram's fellowship this month, and with La Beale Isoud together; and alas, said Palomides, unhappy man that I am, now have I lost the fellowship of Sir Tristram for ever, and the love of La Beale Isoud for ever, and I am never like to see her more, and Sir Tristram and I be either to other mortal enemies. Well, said Epinogris, sith that ye loved La Beale Isoud, loved she you ever again by anything that ye could think or wit, or else did ye rejoice her ever in any pleasure? Nay, by my knighthood, said Palomides, I never espied that ever she loved me more than all the world, nor never had I pleasure with her, but the last day she gave me the greatest rebuke that ever I had, the which shall never go from my heart. And yet I well deserved that rebuke, for I did not knightly, and therefore I have lost the love of her and of Sir Tristram for ever; and I have many times enforced myself to do many deeds for La Beale Isoud's sake, and she was the causer of my worship-winning. Alas, said Sir Palomides, now have I lost all the worship that ever I won, for never shall me befall such prowess as I had in the fellowship of Sir Tristram.

CHAPTER LXXXIII. How Sir Palomides brought Sir Epinogris his lady; and how Sir Palomides and Sir Safere were assailed.

Nay, nay, said Epinogris, your sorrow is but japes to my sorrow; for I rejoiced my lady and won her with my hands, and lost her

Epinogris makes his wail

again: alas that day! Thus first I won her, said Epinogris; my lady was an earl's daughter, and as the earl and two knights came from the tournament of Lonazep, for her sake I set upon this earl and on his two knights, my lady there being present; and so by fortune there I slew the earl and one of the knights, and the other knight fled, and so that night I had my lady. And on the morn as she and I reposed us at this well-side there came there to me an errant knight, his name was Sir Helior le Preuse, an hardy knight, and this Sir Helior challenged me to fight for my lady. And then we went to battle first upon horse and after on foot, but at the last Sir Helior wounded me so that he left me for dead, and so he took my lady with him; and thus my sorrow is more than yours, for I have rejoiced and ye rejoiced never. That is truth, said Palomides, but sith I can never recover myself I shall promise you if I can meet with Sir Helior I shall get you your lady again, or else he shall beat me. Then Sir Palomides made Sir Epinogris to take his horse, and so they rode to an hermitage, and there Sir Epinogris rested him. And in the meanwhile Sir Palomides walked privily out to rest him under the leaves, and there beside he saw a knight come riding with a shield that he had seen Sir Ector de Maris bear beforehand; and there came after him a ten knights, and so these ten knights hoved under the leaves for heat. And anon after there came a knight with a green shield and therein a white lion,

The fight for the lady

leading a lady upon a palfrey. Then this knight with the green shield that seemed to be master of the ten knights, he rode fiercely after Sir Helior, for it was he that hurt Sir Epinogris. And when he came nigh Sir Helior he bade him defend his lady. I will defend her, said Helior, unto my power. And so they ran together so mightily that either of these knights smote other down, horse and all, to the earth; and then they won up lightly and drew their swords and their shields, and lashed together mightily more than an hour. All this Sir Palomides saw and beheld, but ever at the last the knight with Sir Ector's shield was bigger, and at the last this knight smote Sir Helior down, and then that knight unlaced his helm to have stricken off his head. And then he cried mercy, and prayed him to save his life, and bade him take his lady. Then Sir Palomides dressed him up, because he wist well that that same lady was Epinogris' lady, and he promised him to help him. Then Sir Palomides went straight to that lady, and took her by the hand, and asked her whether she knew a knight that hight Epinogris. Alas, she said, that ever he knew me or I him, for I have for his sake lost my worship, and also his life grieveth me most of all. Not so, lady, said Palomides, come on with me, for here is Epinogris in this hermitage. Ah! well is me, said the lady, an he be a-live. Whither wilt thou with that lady? said the knight with Sir Ector's shield. I will do with her what me list, said Palomides. Wit you well, said

that knight, thou speakest over large, though thou seemest me to have at advantage, because thou sawest me do battle but late. Thou weenest, sir knight, to have that lady away from me so lightly? nay, think it never not; an thou were as good a knight as is Sir Launcelot, or as is Sir Tristram, or Sir Palomides, but thou shalt win her dearer than ever did I. And so they went unto battle upon foot, and there they gave many sad strokes, and either wounded other passing sore, and thus they fought still more than an hour. Then Sir Palomides had marvel what knight he might be that was so strong and so well breathed during, and thus said Palomides: Knight, I require thee tell me thy name. Wit thou well, said that knight, I dare tell thee my name, so that thou wilt tell me thy name. I will, said Palomides. Truly, said that knight, my name is Safere, son of King Astlabor, and Sir Palomides and Sir Segwarides are my brethren. Now, and wit thou well, my name is Sir Palomides. Then Sir Safere kneeled down upon his knees, and prayed him of mercy; and then they unlaced their helms and either kissed other weeping. And in the meanwhile Sir Epinogris arose out of his bed, and heard them by the strokes, and so he armed him to help Sir Palomides if need were.

Palomides fights with Safere

They take Epinogris to his castle

CHAPTER LXXXIV. How Sir Palomides and Sir Safere conducted Sir Epinogris to his castle, and of other adventures. Then Sir Palomides took the lady by the hand and brought her to Sir Epinogris, and there was great joy betwixt them, for either swooned for joy. When they were met: Fair knight and lady, said Sir Safere, it were pity to depart you; Jesu send you joy either of other. Gramercy, gentle knight, said Epinogris; and much more thanks be to my lord Sir Palomides, that thus hath through his prowess made me to get my lady. Then Sir Epinogris required Sir Palomides and Sir Safere, his brother, to ride with them unto his castle, for the safeguard of his person. Sir, said Palomides, we will be ready to conduct you because that ye are sore wounded; and so was Epinogris and his lady horsed, and his lady behind him upon a soft ambler. And then they rode unto his castle, where they had great cheer and joy, as great as ever Sir Palomides and Sir Safere had in their life-days. So on the morn Sir Safere and Sir Palomides departed, and rode as fortune led them, and so they rode all that day until afternoon. And at the last they heard a great weeping and a great noise down in a manor. Sir, said then Sir Safere, let us wit what noise this is. I will well, said Sir Palomides. And so they rode forth till that they came to a fair gate of a manor, and there sat an old man saying his prayers and beads. Then Sir Palomides and Sir Safere alit and left their horses, and went within the

gates, and there they saw full many goodly men weeping. Fair sirs, said Palomides, wherefore weep ye and make this sorrow? Anon one of the knights of the castle beheld Sir Palomides and knew him, and then went to his fellows and said: Fair fellows, wit ye well all, we have in this castle the same knight that slew our lord at Lonazep, for I know him well; it is Sir Palomides. Then they went unto harness, all that might bear harness, some on horseback and some on foot, to the number of three score. And when they were ready they came freshly upon Sir Palomides and upon Sir Safere with a great noise, and said thus: Keep thee, Sir Palomides, for thou art known, and by right thou must be dead, for thou hast slain our lord; and therefore wit ye well we will slay thee, therefore defend thee. Then Sir Palomides and Sir Safere, the one set his back to the other, and gave many great strokes, and took many great strokes; and thus they fought with a twenty knights and forty gentlemen and yeomen nigh two hours. But at the last though they were loath, Sir Palomides and Sir Safere were taken and yolden, and put in a strong prison; and within three days twelve knights passed upon them, and they found Sir Palomides guilty, and Sir Safere not guilty, of their lord's death. And when Sir Safere should be delivered there was great dole betwixt Sir Palomides and him, and many piteous complaints that Sir Safere made at his departing, there is no maker can rehearse the tenth part. Fair brother, said Palomides, let be thy dolour and

They are assailed

They are taken prisoner

thy sorrow. An if I be ordained to die a shameful death, welcome be it; but an I had wist of this death that I am deemed unto, I should never have been yolden. So Sir Safere departed from his brother with the greatest dolour and sorrow that ever made knight. And on the morn they of the castle ordained twelve knights to ride with Sir Palomides unto the father of the same knight that Sir Palomides slew; and so they bound his legs under an old steed's belly. And then they rode with Sir Palomides unto a castle by the seaside, that hight Pelownes, and there Sir Palomides should have justice. Thus was their ordinance; and so they rode with Sir Palomides fast by the castle of Joyous Gard. And as they passed by that castle there came riding out of that castle by them one that knew Sir Palomides. And when that knight saw Sir Palomides bounden upon a crooked courser, the knight asked Sir Palomides for what cause he was led so. Ah, my fair fellow and knight, said Palomides, I ride toward my death for the slaying of a knight at a tournament of Lonazep; and if I had not departed from my lord Sir Tristram, as I ought not to have done, now might I have been sure to have had my life saved; but I pray you, sir knight, recommend me unto my lord, Sir Tristram, and unto my lady, Queen Isoud, and say to them if ever I trespassed to them I ask them forgiveness. And also I beseech you recommend me unto my lord, King Arthur, and to all the fellowship of the Round Table, unto my power. Then that knight wept for pity of

Sir Palomides; and therewithal he rode unto Joyous Gard as fast as his horse might run, and lightly that knight descended down off his horse and went unto Sir Tristram, and there he told him all as ye have heard, and ever the knight wept as he had been mad.

Palomides condemned to death

CHAPTER LXXXV. How Sir Tristram made him ready to rescue Sir Palomides, but Sir Launcelot rescued him or he came.

When Sir Tristram heard how Sir Palomides went to his death, he was heavy to hear that, and said: Howbeit that I am wroth with Sir Palomides, yet will not I suffer him to die so shameful a death, for he is a full noble knight. And then anon Sir Tristram was armed and took his horse and two squires with him, and rode a great pace toward the castle of Pelownes where Sir Palomides was judged to death. And these twelve knights that led Sir Palomides passed by a well whereas Sir Launcelot was, which was alit there, and had tied his horse to a tree, and taken off his helm to drink of that well; and when he saw these knights, Sir Launcelot put on his helm and suffered them to pass by him. And then was he ware of Sir Palomides bounden, and led shamefully to his death. O Jesu, said Launcelot, what misadventure is befallen him that he is thus led toward his death? Forsooth, said Launcelot, it were shame to me to suffer this noble knight so to die an I might help him, therefore I will help him whatsomever come of it, or else I shall die for Sir Palomides' sake. And then

Launcelot rescues him

Sir Launcelot mounted upon his horse, and gat his spear in his hand, and rode after the twelve knights that led Sir Palomides. Fair knights, said Sir Launcelot, whither lead ye that knight? it beseemeth him full ill to ride bounden. Then these twelve knights suddenly turned their horses and said to Sir Launcelot: Sir knight, we counsel thee not to meddle with this knight, for he hath deserved death, and unto death he is judged. That me repenteth, said Launcelot, that I may not borrow him with fairness, for he is over good a knight to die such a shameful death. And therefore, fair knights, said Sir Launcelot, keep you as well as ye can, for I will rescue that knight or die for it. Then they began to dress their spears, and Sir Launcelot smote the foremost down, horse and man, and so he served three more with one spear; and then that spear brast, and therewithal Sir Launcelot drew his sword, and then he smote on the right hand and on the left hand. Then within a while he left none of those twelve knights, but he had laid them to the earth, and the most part of them were sore wounded. And then Sir Launcelot took the best horse that he found, and loosed Sir Palomides and set him upon that horse; and so they returned again unto Joyous Gard, and then was Sir Palomides ware of Sir Tristram how he came riding. And when Sir Launcelot saw him he knew him well, but Sir Tristram knew him not because Sir Launcelot had on his shoulder a golden shield. So Sir Launcelot made him ready to joust with Sir Tristram, that Sir Tristram should not ween that he were

Sir Launcelot. Then Sir Palomides cried aloud to Sir Tristram: O my lord, I require you joust not with this knight, for this good knight hath saved me from my death. When Sir Tristram heard him say so he came a soft trotting pace toward them. And then Sir Palomides said: My lord, Sir Tristram, much am I beholding unto you of your great goodness, that would proffer your noble body to rescue me undeserved, for I have greatly offended you. Notwithstanding, said Sir Palomides, here met we with this noble knight that worshipfully and manly rescued me from twelve knights, and smote them down all and wounded them sore.

They meet Tristram

CHAPTER LXXXVI. How Sir Tristram and Launcelot, with Palomides, came to Joyous Gard; and of Palomides and Sir Tristram. Fair knight, said Sir Tristram unto Sir Launcelot, of whence be ye? I am a knight errant, said Sir Launcelot, that rideth to seek many adventures. What is your name? said Sir Tristram. Sir, at this time I will not tell you. Then Sir Launcelot said unto Sir Tristram and to Palomides: Now either of you are met together I will depart from you. Not so, said Sir Tristram; I pray you of knighthood to ride with me unto my castle. Wit you well, said Sir Launcelot, I may not ride with you, for I have many deeds to do in other places, that at this time I may not abide with you. Ah, mercy Jesu, said Sir Tristram, I require you as ye be a true knight to the order of knighthood, play you with me this night.

They go to Joyous Gard

Then Sir Tristram had a grant of Sir Launcelot: howbeit though he had not desired him he would have ridden with them, outher soon have come after them; for Sir Launcelot came for none other cause into that country but for to see Sir Tristram. And when they were come within Joyous Gard they alit, and their horses were led into a stable; and then they unarmed them. And when Sir Launcelot was unhelmed, Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides knew him. Then Sir Tristram took Sir Launcelot in arms, and so did La Beale Isoud; and Palomides kneeled down upon his knees and thanked Sir Launcelot. When Sir Launcelot saw Sir Palomides kneel he lightly took him up and said thus: Wit thou well Sir Palomides, I and any knight in this land, of worship ought of very right succour and rescue so noble a knight as ye are proved and renowned, throughout all this realm endlong and overthwart. And then was there joy among them, and the oftener that Sir Palomides saw La Beale Isoud the heavier he waxed day by day. Then Sir Launcelot within three or four days departed, and with him rode Sir Ector de Maris; and Dinadan and Sir Palomides were there left with Sir Tristram a two months and more. But ever Sir Palomides faded and mourned, that all men had marvel wherefore he faded so away. So upon a day, in the dawning Sir Palomides went into the forest by himself alone; and there he found a well, and then he looked into the well, and in the water he saw his own visage, how he was disturbed and defaded, nothing like that

he was. What may this mean? said Sir Palomides, and thus he said to himself: Ah, Palomides, Palomides, why art thou defaded, thou that was wont to be called one of the fairest knights of the world? I will no more lead this life, for I love that I may never get nor recover. And therewithal he laid him down by the well. And then he began to make a rhyme of La Beale Isoud and him. And in the meanwhile Sir Tristram was that same day ridden into the forest to chase the hart of greese; but Sir Tristram would not ride a-hunting never more unarmed, because of Sir Breuse Saunce Pité. And so as Sir Tristram rode into that forest up and down, he heard one sing marvellously loud, and that was Sir Palomides that lay by the well. And then Sir Tristram rode softly thither, for he deemed there was some knight errant that was at the well. And when Sir Tristram came nigh him he descended down from his horse and tied his horse fast till a tree, and then he came near him on foot; and anon he was ware where lay Sir Palomides by the well and sang loud and merrily; and ever the complaints were of that noble Queen, La Beale Isoud, the which was marvellously and wonderfully well said, and full dolefully and piteously made. And all the whole song the noble knight, Sir Tristram, heard from the beginning to the ending, the which grieved and troubled him sore. But then at the last, when Sir Tristram had heard all Sir Palomides' complaints, he was wroth out of measure, and

Palomides makes a song

Palomides and Tristram

thought for to slay him thereas he lay. Then Sir Tristram remembered himself that Sir Palomides was unarmed, and of the noble name that Sir Palomides had, and the noble name that himself had, and then he made a restraint of his anger; and so he went unto Sir Palomides a soft pace and said: Sir Palomides, I have heard your complaint, and of thy treason that thou hast owed me so long, and wit thou well therefore thou shalt die; and if it were not for shame of knighthood thou shouldest not escape my hands, for now I know well thou hast awaited me with treason. Tell me, said Sir Tristram, how thou wilt acquit thee? Sir, said Palomides, thus I will acquit me: as for Queen La Beale Isoud, ye shall wit well that I love her above all other ladies in this world; and well I wot it shall befall me as for her love as befell to the noble knight Sir Kehydius, that died for the love of La Beale Isoud. And now, Sir Tristram, I will that ye wit that I have loved La Beale Isoud many a day, and she hath been the causer of my worship, and else I had been the most simplest knight in the world. For by her, and because of her, I have won the worship that I have; for when I remembered me of La Beale Isoud I won the worship wheresomever I came for the most part; and yet had I never reward nor bounté of her the days of my life, and yet have I been her knight guerdonless. And therefore, Sir Tristram, as for any death I dread not, for I had as lief die as to live. And if I were armed as thou art, I should lightly do

battle with thee. Well have ye uttered your treason, said Tristram. I have done to you no treason, said Palomides, for love is free for all men, and though I have loved your lady, she is my lady as well as yours; howbeit I have wrong if any wrong be, for ye rejoice her, and have your desire of her, and so had I never nor never am like to have, and yet shall I love her to the uttermost days of my life as well as ye.

They appoint a day to fight

CHAPTER LXXXVII. How there was a day set between Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides for to fight, and how Sir Tristram was hurt. Then said Sir Tristram: I will fight with you to the uttermost. I grant, said Palomides, for in a better quarrel keep I never to fight, for an I die of your hands, of a better knight's hands may I not be slain. And sithen I understand that I shall never rejoice La Beale Isoud, I have as good will to die as to live. Then set ye a day, said Sir Tristram, that we shall do battle. This day fifteen days, said Palomides, will I meet with you hereby, in the meadow under Joyous Gard. Fie for shame, said Sir Tristram, will ye set so long day? let us fight to-morn. Not so, said Palomides, for I am meagre, and have been long sick for the love of La Beale Isoud, and therefore I will repose me till I have my strength again. So then Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides promised faithfully to meet at the well that day fifteen days. I am remembered, said Sir Tristram to Palomides, that ye brake

Tristram hurt while hunting

me once a promise when that I rescued you from Breuse Saunce Pité and nine knights; and then ye promised me to meet me at the peron and the grave beside Camelot, whereas at that time ye failed of your promise. Wit you well, said Palomides unto Sir Tristram, I was at that day in prison, so that I might not hold my promise. So God me help, said Sir Tristram, an ye had holden your promise this work had not been here now at this time. Right so departed Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides. And so Sir Palomides took his horse and his harness, and he rode unto King Arthur's court; and there Sir Palomides gat him four knights and four sergeants-of-arms, and so he returned againward unto Joyous Gard. And in the meanwhile Sir Tristram chased and hunted at all manner of venery; and about three days afore the battle should be, as Sir Tristram chased an hart, there was an archer shot at the hart, and by misfortune he smote Sir Tristram in the thick of the thigh, and the arrow slew Sir Tristram's horse and hurt him. When Sir Tristram was so hurt he was passing heavy, and wit ye well he bled sore; and then he took another horse, and rode unto Joyous Gard with great heaviness, more for the promise that he had made with Sir Palomides, as to do battle with him within three days after, than for any hurt of his thigh. Wherefore there was neither man nor woman that could cheer him with anything that they could make to him, neither Queen La Beale Isoud; for ever he deemed that Sir Palomides had smitten him so that

he should not be able to do battle with him at the day set.

Palomide awaits for Tristram

CHAPTER LXXXVIII. How Sir Palomides kept his day to have foughten, but Sir Tristram might not come; and other things. But in no wise there was no knight about Sir Tristram that would believe that ever Sir Palomides would hurt Sir Tristram, neither by his own hands nor by none other consenting. Then when the fifteenth day was come, Sir Palomides came to the well with four knights with him of Arthur's court, and three sergeants-of-arms. And for this intent Sir Palomides brought the knights with him and the sergeants-of-arms, for they should bear record of the battle betwixt Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides. And the one sergeant brought in his helm, the other his spear, the third his sword. So thus Palomides came into the field, and there he abode nigh two hours; and then he sent a squire unto Sir Tristram, and desired him to come into the field to hold his promise. When the squire was come to Joyous Gard, anon as Sir Tristram heard of his coming he let command that the squire should come to his presence thereas he lay in his bed. My lord Sir Tristram, said Palomides' squire, wit you well my lord, Palomides, abideth you in the field, and he would wit whether ye would do battle or not. Ah, my fair brother, said Sir Tristram, wit thou well that I am right heavy for these tidings; therefore tell Sir Palomides an I were well at ease I would not lie

Tristram unable to come

here, nor he should have no need to send for me an I might either ride or go; and for thou shalt say that I am no liar—Sir Tristram showed him his thigh that the wound was six inches deep. And now thou hast seen my hurt, tell thy lord that this is no feigned matter, and tell him that I had liefer than all the gold of King Arthur that I were whole; and tell Palomides as soon as I am whole I shall seek him endlong and overthwart, and that I promise you as I am true knight; and if ever I may meet with him, he shall have battle of me his fill. And with this the squire departed; and when Palomides wist that Tristram was hurt he was glad and said: Now I am sure I shall have no shame, for I wot well I should have had hard handling of him, and by likely I must needs have had the worse, for he is the hardest knight in battle that now is living except Sir Launcelot. And then departed Sir Palomides whereas fortune led him, and within a month Sir Tristram was whole of his hurt. And then he took his horse, and rode from country to country, and all strange adventures he achieved wheresomever he rode; and always he enquired for Sir Palomides, but of all that quarter of summer Sir Tristram could never meet with Sir Palomides. But thus as Sir Tristram sought and enquired after Sir Palomides Sir Tristram achieved many great battles, wherethrough all the noise fell to Sir Tristram, and it ceased of Sir Launcelot; and therefore Sir Launcelot's brethren and his kinsmen would have slain Sir Tristram because of his

Envy of Sir Tristram

fame. But when Sir Launcelot wist how his kinsmen were set, he said to them openly: Wit you well, that an the envy of you all be so hardy to wait upon my lord, Sir Tristram, with any hurt, shame, or villainy, as I am true knight I shall slay the best of you with mine own hands. Alas, fie for shame, should ye for his noble deeds await upon him to slay him. Jesu defend, said Launcelot, that ever any noble knight as Sir Tristram is should be destroyed with treason. Of this, noise and fame sprang into Cornwall, and among them of Liones, whereof they were passing glad, and made great joy. And then they of Liones sent letters unto Sir Tristram of recommendation, and many great gifts to maintain Sir Tristram's estate; and ever between, Sir Tristram resorted unto Joyous Gard whereas La Beale Isoud was that loved him as her life.

Here endeth the tenth book which is of Sir Tristram. And here followeth the eleventh book which is of Sir Launcelot.

BOOK XI

Launcelot rides on his adventures

CHAPTER I. How Sir Launcelot rode on his adventure, and how he holp a dolorous lady from her pain, and how that he fought with a dragon. Now leave we Sir Tristram de Liones, and speak we of Sir Launcelot du Lake, and of Sir Galahad, Sir Launcelot's son, how he was gotten, and in what manner, as the book of French rehearseth. Afore the time that Sir Galahad was gotten or born, there came in an hermit unto King Arthur upon Whitsunday, as the knights sat at the Table Round. And when the hermit saw the Siege Perilous, he asked the King and all the knights why that siege was void. Sir Arthur and all the knights answered: There shall never none sit in that siege but one, but if he be destroyed. Then said the hermit: Wot ye what is he? Nay, said Arthur and all the knights, we wot not who is he that shall sit therein. Then wot I, said the hermit, for he that shall sit there is unborn and ungotten, and this same year he shall be gotten that shall sit there in that Siege Perilous, and he shall win the Sangreal. When this hermit had made this mention he departed from the court of King Arthur. And then after this feast Sir Launcelot rode on his adventure, till on a time by adventure he passed over the pounte of Corbin; and there he saw the fairest tower that

He helps a dolorous lady

ever he saw, and there-under was a fair town full of people; and all the people, men and women, cried at once: Welcome, Sir Launcelot du Lake, the flower of all knighthood, for by thee all we shall be holpen out of danger. What mean ye, said Sir Launcelot, that ye cry so upon me? Ah, fair knight, said they all, here is within this tower a dolorous lady that hath been there in pains many winters and days, for ever she boileth in scalding water; and but late, said all the people, Sir Gawaine was here and he might not help her, and so he left her in pain. So may I, said Sir Launcelot, leave her in pain as well as Sir Gawaine did. Nay, said the people, we know well that it is Sir Launcelot that shall deliver her. Well, said Launcelot, then shew me what I shall do. Then they brought Sir Launcelot into the tower; and when he came to the chamber thereas this lady was, the doors of iron unlocked and unbolted. And so Sir Launcelot went into the chamber that was as hot as any stew. And there Sir Launcelot took the fairest lady by the hand that ever he saw, and she was naked as a needle; and by enchantment Queen Morgan le Fay and the Queen of Northgalis had put her there in that pains, because she was called the fairest lady of that country; and there she had been five years, and never might she be delivered out of her great pains unto the time the best knight of the world had taken her by the hand. Then the people brought her clothes. And when she was arrayed, Sir Launcelot thought she

He slays a dragon

was the fairest lady of the world, but if it were Queen Guenever. Then this lady said to Sir Launcelot: Sir, if it please you will ye go with me hereby into a chapel that we may give loving and thanking unto God? Madam, said Sir Launcelot, come on with me, I will go with you. So when they came there and gave thankings to God all the people, both learned and lewd, gave thankings unto God and him, and said: Sir knight, sin ye have delivered this lady, ye shall deliver us from a serpent there is here in a tomb. Then Sir Launcelot took his shield and said: Bring me thither, and what I may do unto the pleasure of God and you I will do. So when Sir Launcelot came thither he saw written upon the tomb letters of gold that said thus: Here shall come a leopard of king's blood, and he shall slay this serpent, and this leopard shall engender a lion in this foreign country, the which lion shall pass all other knights. So then Sir Launcelot lift up the tomb, and there came out an horrible and a fiendly dragon, spitting fire out of his mouth. Then Sir Launcelot drew his sword and fought with the dragon long, and at the last with great pain Sir Launcelot slew that dragon. Therewithal came King Pelles, the good and noble knight, and saluted Sir Launcelot, and he him again. Fair knight, said the king, what is your name? I require you of your knighthood tell me!

CHAPTER II. How Sir Launcelot came to Pelles, and of the Sangreal, and of Elaine, King Pelles' daughter. Sir, said Launcelot, wit you well my name is Sir Launcelot du Lake. And my name is, said the king, Pelles, King of the foreign country, and cousin nigh unto Joseph of Armathie. And then either of them made much of other, and so they went into the castle to take their repast. And anon there came in a dove at a window, and in her mouth there seemed a little censer of gold. And therewithal there was such a savour as all the spicery of the world had been there. And forthwithal there was upon the table all manner of meats and drinks that they could think upon. So came in a damosel passing fair and young, and she bare a vessel of gold betwixt her hands; and thereto the King kneeled devoutly, and said his prayers, and so did all that were there. O Jesu, said Sir Launcelot, what may this mean? This is, said the king, the richest thing that any man hath living. And when this thing goeth about, the Round Table shall be broken; and wit thou well, said the king, this is the holy Sangreal that ye have here seen. So the King and Sir Launcelot led their life the most part of that day. And fain would King Pelles have found the mean to have had Sir Launcelot to have lain by his daughter, fair Elaine. And for this intent: the king knew well that Sir Launcelot should get a child upon his daughter, the which should be named Sir Galahad the good knight, by whom all the foreign country should be brought out of danger,

The Sangreal

King Pelles' daughter

and by him the Holy Greal should be achieved. Then came forth a lady that hight Dame Brisen, and she said unto the king: Sir, wit ye well Sir Launcelot loveth no lady in the world but all only Queen Guenever; and therefore work ye by counsel, and I shall make him to lie with your daughter, and he shall not wit but that he lieth with Queen Guenever. O fair lady, Dame Brisen, said the king, hope ye to bring this about? Sir, said she, upon pain of my life let me deal; for this Brisen was one of the greatest enchantresses that was at that time in the world living. Then anon by Dame Brisen's wit she made one to come to Sir Launcelot that he knew well. And this man brought him a ring from Queen Guenever like as it had come from her, and such one as she was wont for the most part to wear; and when Sir Launcelot saw that token wit ye well he was never so fain. Where is my lady? said Sir Launcelot. In the Castle of Case, said the messenger, but five mile hence. Then Sir Launcelot thought to be there the same night. And then this Brisen by the commandment of King Pelles let send Elaine to this castle with twenty-five knights unto the Castle of Case. Then Sir Launcelot against night rode unto that castle, and there anon he was received worshipfully with such people to his seeming as were about Queen Guenever secret. So when Sir Launcelot was alit, he asked where the Queen was. So Dame Brisen said she was in her bed; and then the people were avoided, and Sir Launcelot was led unto his chamber. And then Dame

Brisen brought Sir Launcelot a cupful of wine; and anon as he had drunken that wine he was so assotted and mad that he might make no delay, but withouten any let he went to bed; and he weened that maiden Elaine had been Queen Guenever. Wit you well that Sir Launcelot was glad, and so was that lady Elaine that she had gotten Sir Launcelot in her arms. For well she knew that same night should be gotten upon her Galahad that should prove the best knight of the world; and so they lay together until underne of the morn; and all the windows and holes of that chamber were stopped that no manner of day might be seen. And then Sir Launcelot remembered him, and he arose up and went to the window.

Launcelot and Elaine

CHAPTER III. How Sir Launcelot was displeased when he knew that he had lain by Dame Elaine, and how she was delivered of Galahad. And anon as he had unshut the window the enchantment was gone; then he knew himself that he had done amiss. Alas, he said, that I have lived so long; now I am shamed. So then he gat his sword in his hand and said: Thou traitoress, what art thou that I have lain by all this night? thou shalt die right here of my hands. Then this fair lady Elaine skipped out of her bed all naked, and kneeled down afore Sir Launcelot, and said: Fair courteous knight, come of king's blood, I require you have mercy upon me, and as thou art renowned the most noble knight of the world, slay me not, for I have in my womb

The birth of Galahad

him by thee that shall be the most noblest knight of the world. Ah, false traitoress, said Sir Launcelot, why hast thou betrayed me? anon tell me what thou art. Sir, she said, I am Elaine, the daughter of King Pelles. Well, said Sir Launcelot, I will forgive you this deed; and therewith he took her up in his arms, and kissed her, for she was as fair a lady, and thereto lusty and young, and as wise, as any was that time living. So God me help, said Sir Launcelot, I may not wite this to you; but her that made this enchantment upon me as between you and me, an I may find her, that same Lady Brisen, she shall lose her head for witchcrafts, for there was never knight deceived so as I am this night. And so Sir Launcelot arrayed him, and armed him, and took his leave mildly at that lady young Elaine, and so he departed. Then she said: My lord Sir Launcelot, I beseech you see me as soon as ye may, for I have obeyed me unto the prophecy that my father told me. And by his commandment to fulfil this prophecy I have given the greatest riches and the fairest flower that ever I had, and that is my maidenhood that I shall never have again; and therefore, gentle knight, owe me your goodwill. And so Sir Launcelot arrayed him and was armed, and took his leave mildly at that young lady Elaine; and so he departed, and rode till he came to the Castle of Corbin, where her father was. And as fast as her time came she was delivered of a fair child, and they christened him Galahad; and wit ye well that child was well kept and well nourished,

and he was named Galahad because Sir Launcelot was so named at the fountain stone; and after that the Lady of the Lake confirmed him Sir Launcelot du Lake. Then after this lady was delivered and churched there came a knight unto her, his name was Sir Bromel la Pleche, the which was a great lord; and he had loved that lady long, and he evermore desired her to wed her; and so by no mean she could put him off, till on a day she said to Sir Bromel: Wit thou well, sir knight, I will not love you, for my love is set upon the best knight of the world. Who is he? said Sir Bromel. Sir, she said, it is Sir Launcelot du Lake that I love and none other, and therefore woo me no longer. Ye say well, said Sir Bromel, and sithen ye have told me so much, ye shall have but little joy of Sir Launcelot, for I shall slay him wheresomever I meet him. Sir, said the Lady Elaine, do to him no treason. Wit ye well, my lady, said Bromel, and I promise you this twelvemonth I shall keep the pounte of Corbin for Sir Launcelot's sake, that he shall neither come nor go unto you, but I shall meet with him.

Sir Bromel la Pleche

CHAPTER IV. How Sir Bors came to Dame Elaine and saw Galahad, and how he was fed with the Sangreal. Then as it fell by fortune and adventure, Sir Bors de Ganis, that was nephew unto Sir Launcelot, came over that bridge; and there Sir Bromel and Sir Bors jousted, and Sir Bors smote Sir Bromel such a buffet that he bare him over his horse's croup.

Sir Bors overthrows Bromel

And then Sir Bromel as an hardy knight pulled out his sword, and dressed his shield to do battle with Sir Bors. And then Sir Bors alit and avoided his horse, and there they dashed together many sad strokes; and long thus they fought, till at the last Sir Bromel was laid to the earth, and there Sir Bors began to unlace his helm to slay him. Then Sir Bromel cried Sir Bors mercy, and yielded him. Upon this covenant thou shalt have thy life, said Sir Bors, so thou go unto Sir Launcelot upon Whitsunday that next cometh, and yield thee unto him as knight recreant. I will do it, said Sir Bromel, and that he sware upon the cross of the sword. And so he let him depart, and Sir Bors rode unto King Pelles, that was within Corbin. And when the King and Elaine his daughter wist that Sir Bors was nephew unto Sir Launcelot, they made him great cheer. Then said Dame Elaine: We marvel where Sir Launcelot is, for he came never here but once. Marvel not, said Sir Bors, for this half year he hath been in prison with Queen Morgan le Fay, King Arthur's sister. Alas, said Dame Elaine, that me repenteth. And ever Sir Bors beheld that child in her arms, and ever him seemed it was passing like Sir Launcelot. Truly, said Elaine, wit ye well this child he gat upon me. Then Sir Bors wept for joy, and he prayed to God it might prove as good a knight as his father was. And so came in a white dove, and she bare a little censer of gold in her mouth, and there was all manner of meats and drinks; and a maiden bare that Sangreal, and she said openly:

Wit you well, Sir Bors, that this child is Galahad, that shall sit in the Siege Perilous, and achieve the Sangreal, and he shall be much better than ever was Sir Launcelot du Lake, this is his own father. And then they kneeled down and made their devotions, and there was such a savour as all the spicery in the world had been there. And when the dove took her flight, the maiden vanished with the Sangreal as she came. Sir, said Sir Bors unto King Pelles, this castle may be named the Castle Adventurous, for here be many strange adventures. That is sooth, said the king, for well may this place be called the adventures place, for there come but few knights here that go away with any worship; be he never so strong, here he may be proved; and but late Sir Gawaine, the good knight, gat but little worship here. For I let you wit, said King Pelles, here shall no knight win no worship but if he be of worship himself and of good living, and that loveth God and dreadeth God, and else he getteth no worship here, be he never so hardy. That is wonderful thing, said Sir Bors. What ye mean in this country I wot not, for ye have many strange adventures, and therefore I will lie in this castle this night. Ye shall not do so, said King Pelles, by my counsel, for it is hard an ye escape without a shame. I shall take the adventure that will befall me, said Sir Bors. Then I counsel you, said the king, to be confessed clean. As for that, said Sir Bors, I will be shriven with a good will. So Sir Bors was confessed, and for all women Sir Bors was a

Bors is fed by the Sangreal

He stays in the Castle of Corbin

virgin, save for one, that was the daughter of King Brangoris, and on her he gat a child that hight Elaine, and save for her Sir Bors was a clean maiden. And so Sir Bors was led unto bed in a fair large chamber, and many doors were shut about the chamber. When Sir Bors espied all those doors, he avoided all the people, for he might have nobody with him; but in no wise Sir Bors would unarm him, but so he laid him down upon the bed. And right so he saw come in a light, that he might well see a spear great and long that came straight upon him pointling, and to Sir Bors seemed that the head of the spear brent like a taper. And anon or Sir Bors wist, the spear head smote him into the shoulder an handbreath in deepness, and that wound grieved Sir Bors passing sore. And then he laid him down again for pain; and anon therewithal there came a knight armed with his shield on his shoulder and his sword in his hand, and he bade Sir Bors: Arise, sir knight, and fight with me. I am sore hurt, he said, but yet I shall not fail thee. And then Sir Bors started up and dressed his shield; and then they lashed together mightily a great while; and at the last Sir Bors bare him backward until that he came unto a chamber door, and there that knight yede into that chamber and rested him a great while. And when he had reposed him he came out freshly again, and began new battle with Sir Bors mightily and strongly.

CHAPTER V. How Sir Bors made Sir Pedivere to yield him, and of marvellous adventures that he had, and how he achieved them. Then Sir Bors thought he should no more go into that chamber to rest him, and so Sir Bors dressed him betwixt the knight and that chamber door, and there Sir Bors smote him down, and then that knight yielded him. What is your name? said Sir Bors. Sir, said he, my name is Pedivere of the Straight Marches. So Sir Bors made him to swear at Whitsunday next coming to be at the court of King Arthur, and yield him there as a prisoner as an overcome knight by the hands of Sir Bors. So thus departed Sir Pedivere of the Straight Marches. And then Sir Bors laid him down to rest, and then he heard and felt much noise in that chamber; and then Sir Bors espied that there came in, he wist not whether at the doors nor windows, shot of arrows and of quarrels so thick that he marvelled, and many fell upon him and hurt him in the bare places. And then Sir Bors was ware where came in an hideous lion; so Sir Bors dressed him unto the lion, and anon the lion bereft him his shield, and with his sword Sir Bors smote off the lion's head. Right so Sir Bors forthwithal saw a dragon in the court passing horrible, and there seemed letters of gold written in his forehead; and Sir Bors thought that the letters made a signification of King Arthur. Right so there came an horrible leopard and an old, and there they fought long, and did great battle together. And

His wonderful adventures

The Spear of Vengeance

at the last the dragon spit out of his mouth as it had been an hundred dragons; and lightly all the small dragons slew the old dragon and tare him all to pieces. Anon withal there came an old man into the hall, and he sat him down in a fair chair, and there seemed to be two adders about his neck; and then the old man had an harp, and there he sang an old song how Joseph of Armathie came into this land. Then when he had sung, the old man bade Sir Bors go from thence. For here shall ye have no more adventures; and full worshipfully have ye done, and better shall ye do hereafter. And then Sir Bors seemed that there came the whitest dove with a little golden censer in her mouth. And anon therewithal the tempest ceased and passed, that afore was marvellous to hear. So was all that court full of good savours. Then Sir Bors saw four children bearing four fair tapers, and an old man in the middes of the children with a censer in his own hand, and a spear in his other hand, and that spear was called the Spear of Vengeance.

CHAPTER VI. How Sir Bors departed; and how Sir Launcelot was rebuked of Queen Guenever, and of his excuse. Now, said that old man to Sir Bors, go ye to your cousin, Sir Launcelot, and tell him of this adventure the which had been most convenient for him of all earthly knights; but sin is so foul in him he may not achieve such holy deeds, for had not been his sin he had passed

all the knights that ever were in his days; and tell thou Sir Launcelot, of all worldly adventures he passeth in manhood and prowess all other, but in this spiritual matters he shall have many his better. And then Sir Bors saw four gentlewomen come by him, purely beseen: and he saw where that they entered into a chamber where was great light as it were a summer light; and the women kneeled down afore an altar of silver with four pillars, and as it had been a bishop kneeled down afore that table of silver. And as Sir Bors looked over his head he saw a sword like silver naked hoving over his head, and the clearness thereof smote so in his eyes that as at that time Sir Bors was blind; and there he heard a voice that said: Go hence, thou Sir Bors, for as yet thou art not worthy for to be in this place. And then he yede backward to his bed till on the morn. And on the morn King Pelles made great joy of Sir Bors; and then he departed and rode to Camelot, and there he found Sir Launcelot du Lake, and told him of the adventures that he had seen with King Pelles at Corbin. So the noise sprang in Arthur's court that Launcelot had gotten a child upon Elaine, the daughter of King Pelles, wherefore Queen Guenever was wroth, and gave many rebukes to Sir Launcelot, and called him false knight. And then Sir Launcelot told the Queen all, and how he was made to lie by her by enchantment in likeness of the queen. So the Queen held Sir Launcelot excused. And as the book saith, King Arthur

The altar of silver

Bors rides to Camelot

had been in France, and had made war upon the mighty King Claudas, and had won much of his lands. And when the King was come again he let cry a great feast, that all lords and ladies of all England should be there, but if it were such as were rebellious against him.

CHAPTER VII. How Dame Elaine, Galahad's mother, came in great estate unto Camelot, and how Sir Launcelot behaved him there. And when Dame Elaine, the daughter of King Pelles, heard of this feast she went to her father and required him that he would give her leave to ride to that feast. The king answered: I will well ye go thither, but in any wise as ye love me and will have my blessing, that ye be well beseen in the richest wise; and look that ye spare not for no cost; ask and ye shall have all that you needeth. Then by the advice of Dame Brisen, her maiden, all thing was apparelled unto the purpose, that there was never no lady more richlier beseen. So she rode with twenty knights, and ten ladies, and gentlewomen, to the number of an hundred horses. And when she came to Camelot, King Arthur and Queen Guenever said, and all the knights, that Dame Elaine was the fairest and the best beseen lady that ever was seen in that court. And anon as King Arthur wist that she was come he met her and saluted her, and so did the most part of all the knights of the Round Table, both Sir Tristram, Sir Bleoberis, and Sir

Elaine comes to Camelot

Gawaine, and many more that I will not rehearse. But when Sir Launcelot saw her he was so ashamed, and that because he drew his sword on the morn when he had lain by her, that he would not salute her nor speak to her; and yet Sir Launcelot thought she was the fairest woman that ever he saw in his life-days. But when Dame Elaine saw Sir Launcelot that would not speak unto her she was so heavy that she weened her heart would have to brast, for wit you well, out of measure she loved him. And then Elaine said unto her woman, Dame Brisen: The unkindness of Sir Launcelot slayeth me near. Ah, peace, madam, said Dame Brisen, I will undertake that this night shall he lie with you, an ye would hold you still. That were me liefer, said Dame Elaine, than all the gold that is above the earth. Let me deal, said Dame Brisen. So when Elaine was brought unto Queen Guenever either made other good cheer by countenance, but nothing with hearts. But all men and women spake of the beauty of Dame Elaine, and of her great riches. Then at night the Queen commanded that Dame Elaine should sleep in a chamber nigh her chamber, and all under one roof; and so it was done as the queen commanded. Then the queen sent for Sir Launcelot and bade him come to her chamber that night: Or else I am sure, said the queen, that ye will go to your lady's bed, Dame Elaine, by whom ye gat Galahad. Ah, madam, said Sir Launcelot, never say ye so, for that I did was against my will. Then,

Launcelot's behaviour

said the Queen, look that ye come to me when I send for you. Madam, said Launcelot, I shall not fail you, but I shall be ready at your commandment. This bargain was soon done and made between them, but Dame Brisen knew it by her crafts, and told it to her lady, Dame Elaine. Alas, said she, how shall I do? Let me deal, said Dame Brisen, for I shall bring him by the hand even to your bed, and he shall ween that I am Queen Guenever's messenger. Now well is me, said Dame Elaine, for all the world I love not so much as I do Sir Launcelot.

CHAPTER VIII. How Dame Brisen by enchantment brought Sir Launcelot to Dame Elaine's bed, and how Queen Guenever rebuked him. So when time came that all folks were abed, Dame Brisen came to Sir Launcelot's bed's side and said: Sir Launcelot du Lake, sleep you? My lady, Queen Guenever, lieth and awaiteth upon you. O my fair lady, said Sir Launcelot, I am ready to go with you where ye will have me. So Sir Launcelot threw upon him a long gown, and his sword in his hand; and then Dame Brisen took him by the finger and led him to her lady's bed, Dame Elaine; and then she departed and left them in bed together. Wit you well the lady was glad, and so was Sir Launcelot, for he weened that he had had another in his arms. Now leave we them kissing and clipping, as was kindly thing; and now speak we of Queen Guenever that sent one of her women unto

Sir Launcelot's bed; and when she came there she found the bed cold, and he was away; so she came to the queen and told her all. Alas, said the queen, where is that false knight become? Then the queen was nigh out of her wit, and then she writhed and weltered as a mad woman, and might not sleep a four or five hours. Then Sir Launcelot had a condition that he used of custom, he would clatter in his sleep, and speak oft of his lady, Queen Guenever. So as Sir Launcelot had waked as long as it had pleased him, then by course of kind he slept, and Dame Elaine both. And in his sleep he talked and clattered as a jay, of the love that had been betwixt Queen Guenever and him. And so as he talked so loud the queen heard him thereas she lay in her chamber; and when she heard him so clatter she was nigh wood and out of her mind, and for anger and pain wist not what to do. And then she coughed so loud that Sir Launcelot awaked, and he knew her heming. And then he knew well that he lay not by the queen; and therewith he leapt out of his bed as he had been a wood man, in his shirt, and the queen met him in the floor; and thus she said: False traitor knight that thou art, look thou never abide in my court, and avoid my chamber, and not so hardy, thou false traitor knight that thou art, that ever thou come in my sight. Alas, said Sir Launcelot; and therewith he took such an heartly sorrow at her words that he fell down to the floor in a swoon. And therewithal Queen Guen-

Guenever wroth

Launcelot becomes mad

ever departed. And when Sir Launcelot awoke of his swoon, he leapt out at a bay window into a garden, and there with thorns he was all to-scratched in his visage and his body; and so he ran forth he wist not whither, and was wild wood as ever was man; and so he ran two year, and never man might have grace to know him.

CHAPTER IX. How Dame Elaine was commanded by Queen Guenever to avoid the court, and how Sir Launcelot became mad. Now turn we unto Queen Guenever and to the fair Lady Elaine, that when Dame Elaine heard the Queen so to rebuke Sir Launcelot, and also she saw how he swooned, and how he leaped out at a bay window, then she said unto Queen Guenever: Madam, ye are greatly to blame for Sir Launcelot, for now have ye lost him, for I saw and heard by his countenance that he is mad for ever. Alas, madam, ye do great sin, and to yourself great dishonour, for ye have a lord of your own, and therefore it is your part to love him; for there is no queen in this world hath such another king as ye have. And if ye were not I might have the love of my lord Sir Launcelot; and cause I have to love him for he had my maidenhood, and by him I have borne a fair son, and his name is Galahad, and he shall be in his time the best knight of the world. Dame Elaine, said the queen, when it is daylight I charge you and command you to avoid my court; and for the love ye

Guenever and Elaine

owe unto Sir Launcelot discover not his counsel, for an ye do, it will be his death. As for that, said Dame Elaine, I dare undertake he is marred for ever, and that have ye made; for ye nor I are like to rejoice him, for he made the most piteous groans when he leapt out at yonder bay window that ever I heard man make. Alas, said fair Elaine, and alas, said the Queen Guenever, for now I wot well we have lost him for ever. So on the morn Dame Elaine took her leave to depart, and she would no longer abide. Then King Arthur brought her on her way with more than an hundred knights through a forest. And by the way she told Sir Bors de Ganis all how it betid that same night, and how Sir Launcelot leapt out at a window araged out of his wit. Alas, said Sir Bors, where is my lord, Sir Launcelot, become? Sir, said Elaine, I wot near. Alas, said Sir Bors, betwixt you both ye have destroyed that good knight. As for me, said Dame Elaine, I said never nor did never thing that should in any wise displease him, but with the rebuke that Queen Guenever gave him I saw him swoon to the earth; and when he awoke he took his sword in his hand, naked save his shirt, and leapt out at a window with the grisliest groan that ever I heard man make. Now farewell, Dame Elaine, said Sir Bors, and hold my lord Arthur with a tale as long as ye can, for I will turn again to Queen Guenever and give her a hete; and I require you, as ever ye will have my service, make

Elaine leaves the court

good watch and espy if ever ye may see my lord Sir Launcelot. Truly, said fair Elaine, I shall do all that I may do, for as fain would I know and wit where he is become, as you, or any of his kin, or Queen Guenever; and cause great enough have I thereto as well as any other. And wit ye well, said fair Elaine to Sir Bors, I would lose my life for him rather than he should be hurt; but alas, I cast me never for to see him, and the chief causer of this is Dame Guenever. Madam, said Dame Brisen, the which had made the enchantment before betwixt Sir Launcelot and her, I pray you heartily, let Sir Bors depart, and hie him with all his might as fast as he may to seek Sir Launcelot, for I warn you he is clean out of his mind; and yet he shall be well holpen an but by miracle. Then wept Dame Elaine, and so did Sir Bors de Ganis; and so they departed, and Sir Bors rode straight unto Queen Guenever. And when she saw Sir Bors she wept as she were wood. Fie on your weeping, said Sir Bors de Ganis, for ye weep never but when there is no bote. Alas, said Sir Bors, that ever Sir Launcelot's kin saw you, for now have ye lost the best knight of our blood, and he that was all our leader and our succour; and I dare say and make it good that all kings, christian nor heathen, may not find such a knight, for to speak of his nobleness and courtesy, with his beauty and his gentleness. Alas, said Sir Bors, what shall we do that be of his blood? Alas, said Sir Ector de Maris. Alas, said Lionel.

CHAPTER X. What sorrow Queen Guenever made for Sir Launcelot, and how he was sought by knights of his kin. And when the queen heard them say so she fell to the earth in a dead swoon. And then Sir Bors took her up, and dawed her; and when she was awaked she kneeled afore the three knights, and held up both her hands, and besought them to seek him. And spare not for no goods but that he be found, for I wot he is out of his mind. And Sir Bors, Sir Ector, and Sir Lionel departed from the queen, for they might not abide no longer for sorrow. And then the Queen sent them treasure enough for their expenses, and so they took their horses and their armour, and departed. And then they rode from country to country, in forests, and in wilderness, and in wastes; and ever they laid watch both at forests and at all manner of men as they rode, to hearken and spere after him, as he that was a naked man, in his shirt, with a sword in his hand. And thus they rode nigh a quarter of a year, endlong and overthwart, in many places, forests and wilderness, and oft-times were evil lodged for his sake; and yet for all their labour and seeking could they never hear word of him. And wit you well these three knights were passing sorry. Then at the last Sir Bors and his fellows met with a knight that hight Sir Melion de Tartare. Now fair knight, said Sir Bors, whither be ye away? for they knew either other afore time. Sir, said Melion, I am in the way toward the court of King Arthur.

Launcelot sought for

by knights of his kin

Then we pray you, said Sir Bors, that ye will tell my lord Arthur, and my lady, Queen Guenever, and all the fellowship of the Round Table, that we cannot in no wise hear tell where Sir Launcelot is become. Then Sir Melion departed from them, and said that he would tell the King, and the Queen, and all the fellowship of the Round Table, as they had desired him. So when Sir Melion came to the court of King Arthur he told the King, and the Queen, and all the fellowship of the Round Table, what Sir Bors had said of Sir Launcelot. Then Sir Gawaine, Sir Uwaine, Sir Sagramore le Desirous, Sir Aglovale, and Sir Percivale de Galis took upon them by the great desire of King Arthur, and in especial by the Queen, to seek throughout all England, Wales, and Scotland, to find Sir Launcelot, and with them rode eighteen knights more to bear them fellowship; and wit ye well, they lacked no manner of spending; and so were they three and twenty knights. Now turn we to Sir Launcelot, and speak we of his care and woe, and what pain he there endured; for cold, hunger, and thirst, he had plenty. And thus as these noble knights rode together, they by one assent departed, and then they rode by two, by three, and by four, and by five, and ever they assigned where they should meet. And so Sir Aglovale and Sir Percivale rode together unto their mother that was a queen in those days. And when she saw her two sons, for joy she wept tenderly. And then she said: Ah, my dear sons, when your father was slain he left

me four sons, of the which now be twain slain. And for the death of my noble son, Sir Lamorak, shall my heart never be glad. And then she kneeled down upon her knees tofore Aglovale and Sir Percivale, and besought them to abide at home with her. Ah, sweet mother, said Sir Percivale, we may not, for we be come of king's blood of both parties, and therefore, mother, it is our kind to haunt arms and noble deeds. Alas, my sweet sons, then she said, for your sakes I shall lose my liking and lust, and then wind and weather I may not endure, what for the death of your father, King Pellinore, that was shamefully slain by the hands of Sir Gawaine, and his brother, Sir Gaheris: and they slew him not manly but by treason. Ah, my dear sons, this is a piteous complaint for me of your father's death, considering also the death of Sir Lamorak, that of knighthood had but few fellows. Now, my dear sons, have this in your mind. Then there was but weeping and sobbing in the court when they should depart, and she fell a-swooning in middes of the court.

Aglovale and Percivale visit their mother

CHAPTER XI. How a servant of Sir Aglovale's was slain, and what vengeance Sir Aglovale and Sir Percivale did therefore.

And when she was awaked she sent a squire after them with spending enough. And so when the squire had overtaken them, they would not suffer him to ride with them, but sent him home again to comfort their mother, praying her meekly of her blessing. And so this squire was benighted, and by misfortune

Aglovale's servant slain

he happened to come to a castle where dwelled a baron. And so when the squire was come into the castle, the lord asked him from whence he came, and whom he served. My lord, said the squire, I serve a good knight that is called Sir Aglovale: the squire said it to good intent, weening unto him to have been more forborne for Sir Aglovale's sake, than he had said he had served the queen, Aglovale's mother. Well, my fellow, said the lord of that castle, for Sir Aglovale's sake thou shalt have evil lodging, for Sir Aglovale slew my brother, and therefore thou shalt die on part of payment. And then that lord commanded his men to have him away and slay him; and so they did, and so pulled him out of the castle, and there they slew him without mercy. Right so on the morn came Sir Aglovale and Sir Percivale riding by a churchyard, where men and women were busy, and beheld the dead squire, and they thought to bury him. What is there, said Sir Aglovale, that ye behold so fast? A good man stert forth and said: Fair knight, here lieth a squire slain shamefully this night. How was he slain, fair fellow? said Sir Aglovale. My fair sir, said the man, the lord of this castle lodged this squire this night; and because he said he was servant unto a good knight that is with King Arthur, his name is Sir Aglovale, therefore the lord commanded to slay him, and for this cause is he slain. Gramercy, said Sir Aglovale, and ye shall see his death revenged lightly; for I am that same knight for whom this squire was slain. Then Sir Aglovale called unto him Sir Percivale, and

Aglovale avenges his death

bade him alight lightly; and so they alit both, and betook their horses to their men, and so they yede on foot into the castle. And all so soon as they were within the castle gate Sir Aglovale bade the porter: Go thou unto thy lord and tell him that I am Sir Aglovale for whom this squire was slain this night. Anon the porter told this to his lord, whose name was Goodewin. Anon he armed him, and then he came into the court and said: Which of you is Sir Aglovale? Here I am, said Aglovale: for what cause slewest thou this night my mother's squire? I slew him, said Sir Goodewin, because of thee, for thou slewest my brother, Sir Gawdelin. As for thy brother, said Sir Aglovale, I avow it I slew him, for he was a false knight and a betrayer of ladies and of good knights; and for the death of my squire thou shalt die. I defy thee, said Sir Goodewin. Then they lashed together as eagerly as it had been two lions, and Sir Percivale he fought with all the remnant that would fight. And within a while Sir Percivale had slain all that would withstand him; for Sir Percivale dealt so his strokes that were so rude that there durst no man abide him. And within a while Sir Aglovale had Sir Goodewin at the earth, and there he unlaced his helm, and struck off his head. And then they departed and took their horses; and then they let carry the dead squire unto a priory, and there they interred him.

Percivale and the bound knight

CHAPTER XII. How Sir Percivale departed secretly from his brother, and how he loosed a knight bound with a chain, and of other doings. And when this was done they rode into many countries, ever inquiring after Sir Launcelot, but never they could hear of him; and at the last they came to a castle that hight Cardican, and there Sir Percivale and Sir Aglovale were lodged together. And privily about midnight Sir Percivale came to Aglovale's squire and said: Arise and make thee ready, for ye and I will ride away secretly. Sir, said the squire, I would full fain ride with you where ye would have me, but an my lord, your brother, take me he will slay me. As for that care thou not, for I shall be thy warrant. And so Sir Percivale rode till it was after noon, and then he came upon a bridge of stone, and there he found a knight that was bound with a chain fast about the waist unto a pillar of stone. O fair knight, said that bound knight, I require thee loose me of my bonds. What knight are ye, said Sir Percivale, and for what cause are ye so bound? Sir, I shall tell you, said that knight: I am a knight of the Table Round, and my name is Sir Persides; and thus by adventure I came this way, and here I lodged in this castle at the bridge foot, and therein dwelleth an uncourteous lady; and because she proffered me to be her paramour, and I refused her, she set her men upon me suddenly or ever I might come to my weapon; and thus they bound me, and here I wot well I shall die but if some man of worship break my bands. Be ye of

good cheer, said Sir Percivale, and because ye are a knight of the Round Table as well as I, I trust to God to break your bonds. And therewith Sir Percivale pulled out his sword and struck at the chain with such a might that he cut a-two the chain, and through Sir Persides' hauberk and hurt him a little. O Jesu, said Sir Persides, that was a mighty stroke as ever I felt one, for had not the chain been ye had slain me. And therewithal Sir Persides saw a knight coming out of a castle all that ever he might fling. Beware, sir, said Sir Persides, yonder cometh a man that will have ado with you. Let him come, said Sir Percivale. And so he met with that knight in middes of the bridge; and Sir Percivale gave him such a buffet that he smote him quite from his horse and over a part of the bridge, that had not been a little vessel under the bridge, that knight had been drowned. And then Sir Percivale took the knight's horse and made Sir Persides to mount up him; and so they rode unto the castle, and bade the lady deliver Sir Persides' servants, or else he would slay all that ever he found; and so for fear she delivered them all. Then was Sir Percivale ware of a lady that stood in that tower. Ah, madam, said Sir Percivale, what use and custom is that in a lady to destroy good knights but if they will be your paramour? Forsooth this is a shameful custom of a lady, and if I had not a great matter in my hand I should fordo your evil customs. And so Sir Persides brought Sir Percivale unto his own castle, and

The battle of the bridge

Percivale's message

there he made him great cheer all that night. And on the morn, when Sir Percivale had heard mass and broken his fast, he bade Sir Persides ride unto King Arthur: And tell the king how that ye met with me; and tell my brother, Sir Aglovale, how I rescued you; and bid him seek not after me, for I am in the quest to seek Sir Launcelot du Lake, and though he seek me he shall not find me; and tell him I will never see him nor the court till I have found Sir Launcelot. Also tell Sir Kay the Seneschal, and to Sir Mordred, that I trust to Jesu to be of as great worthiness as either of them, for tell them I shall never forget their mocks and scorns that they did to me that day that I was made knight; and tell them I will never see that court till men speak more worship of me than ever men did of any of them both. And so Sir Persides departed from Sir Percivale, and then he rode unto King Arthur, and told there of Sir Percivale. And when Sir Aglovale heard him speak of his brother Sir Percivale, he said: He departed from me unkindly.

CHAPTER XIII. How Sir Percivale met with Sir Ector, and how they fought long, and each had almost slain other. Sir, said Sir Persides, on my life he shall prove a noble knight as any now is living. And when he saw Sir Kay and Sir Mordred, Sir Persides said thus: My fair lords both, Sir Percivale greeteth you well both, and he sent you word by me that he trusteth to God or ever he come

to the court again to be of as great noblesse as ever were ye both, and more men to speak of his noblesse than ever they did of you. It may well be, said Sir Kay and Sir Mordred, but at that time when he was made knight he was full unlike to prove a good knight. As for that, said King Arthur, he must needs prove a good knight, for his father and his brethren were noble knights. And now will we turn unto Sir Percivale that rode long; and in a forest he met a knight with a broken shield and a broken helm; and as soon as either saw other readily they made them ready to joust, and so hurtled together with all the might of their horses, and met together so hard, that Sir Percivale was smitten to the earth. And then Sir Percivale arose lightly, and cast his shield on his shoulder and drew his sword, and bade the other knight: Alight, and do we battle unto the uttermost. Will ye more? said that knight. And therewith he alit, and put his horse from him; and then they came together an easy pace, and there they lashed together with noble swords, and sometime they struck and sometime they foined, and either gave other many great wounds. Thus they fought near half a day, and never rested but right little, and there was none of them both that had less wounds than fifteen, and they bled so much that it was marvel they stood on their feet. But this knight that fought with Sir Percivale was a proved knight and a wise-fighting knight, and Sir Percivale was young and strong, not knowing in fighting as the other was. Then

The knight with the broken shield

Percivale fights with him

Sir Percivale spoke first, and said: Sir knight, hold thy hand a while still, for we have fought for a simple matter and quarrel overlong, and therefore I require thee tell me thy name, for I was never or this time matched. So God me help, said that knight, and never or this time was there never knight that wounded me so sore as thou hast done, and yet have I fought in many battles; and now shalt thou wit that I am a knight of the Table Round, and my name is Sir Ector de Maris, brother unto the good knight, Sir Launcelot du Lake. Alas, said Sir Percivale, and my name is Sir Percivale de Galis that hath made my quest to seek Sir Launcelot, and now I am siker that I shall never finish my quest, for ye have slain me with your hands. It is not so, said Sir Ector, for I am slain by your hands, and may not live. Therefore I require you, said Sir Ector unto Sir Percivale, ride ye hereby to a priory, and bring me a priest that I may receive my Saviour, for I may not live. And when ye come to the court of King Arthur tell not my brother, Sir Launcelot, how that ye slew me, for then he would be your mortal enemy, but ye may say that I was slain in my quest as I sought him. Alas, said Sir Percivale, ye say that never will be, for I am so faint for bleeding that I may unnethe stand, how should I then take my horse?

CHAPTER XIV. How by miracle they were both made whole by the coming of the holy vessel of Sangreal. Then they made both great dole out of measure. This will not avail, said Sir Percivale. And then he kneeled down and made his prayer devoutly unto Almighty Jesu, for he was one of the best knights of the world that at that time was, in whom the very faith stood most in. Right so there came by the Holy vessel of the Sangreal with all manner of sweetness and savour; but they could not readily see who that bare that vessel, but Sir Percivale had a glimmering of the vessel and of the maiden that bare it, for he was a perfect clean maiden; and forthwithal they both were as whole of hide and limb as ever they were in their life-days: then they gave thankings to God with great mildness. O Jesu, said Sir Percivale, what may this mean, that we be thus healed, and right now we were at the point of dying? I wot full well, said Sir Ector, what it is; it is an Holy vessel that is borne by a maiden, and therein is part of the holy blood of our Lord Jesu Christ, blessed mote he be. But it may not be seen, said Sir Ector, but if it be by a perfect man. So God me help, said Sir Percivale, I saw a damosel, as me thought, all in white, with a vessel in both her hands, and forthwithal I was whole. So then they took their horses and their harness, and amended their harness as well as they might that was broken; and so they mounted upon their horses, and rode talking together. And there Sir Ector de Maris

The miracle of the Sangreal

Percivale and Ector talk together

told Sir Percivale how he had sought his brother, Sir Launcelot, long, and never could hear witting of him: In many strange adventures have I been in this quest. And so either told other of their adventures.

Here endeth the eleventh book.
And here followeth the
twelfth book.

BOOK XII

CHAPTER I. How Sir Launcelot in his madness took a sword and fought with a knight, and leapt in a bed. And now leave we off a while of Sir Ector and of Sir Percivale, and speak we of Sir Launcelot that suffered and endured many sharp showers, that ever ran wild wood from place to place, and lived by fruit and such as he might get, and drank water two year; and other clothing had he but little but his shirt and his breeches. Thus as Sir Launcelot wandered here and there he came in a fair meadow where he found a pavilion; and there by, upon a tree, there hung a white shield, and two swords hung thereby, and two spears leaned there by a tree. And when Sir Launcelot saw the swords, anon he leapt to the one sword, and took it in his hand, and drew it out. And then he lashed at the shield, that all the meadow rang of the dints, that he gave such a noise as ten knights had foughten together. Then came forth a dwarf, and leapt unto Sir Launcelot, and would have had the sword out of his hand. And then Sir Launcelot took him by the both shoulders and threw him to the ground upon his neck, that he had almost broken his neck; and therewithal the dwarf cried help. Then came forth a likely knight, and well apparelled in scarlet furred with minever. And anon as he

Launcelot takes a sword

He fights with a knight

saw Sir Launcelot he deemed that he should be out of his wit. And then he said with fair speech: Good man, lay down that sword, for as meseemeth thou hadst more need of sleep and of warm clothes than to wield that sword. As for that, said Sir Launcelot, come not too nigh, for an thou do, wit thou well I will slay thee. And when the knight of the pavilion saw that, he stert backward within the pavilion. And then the dwarf armed him lightly; and so the knight thought by force and might to take the sword from Sir Launcelot, and so he came stepping out; and when Sir Launcelot saw him come so all armed with his sword in his hand, then Sir Launcelot flew to him with such a might, and hit him upon the helm such a buffet, that the stroke troubled his brains, and therewith the sword brake in three. And the knight fell to the earth as he had been dead, the blood brasting out of his mouth, the nose, and the ears. And then Sir Launcelot ran into the pavilion, and rushed even into the warm bed; and there was a lady in that bed, and she gat her smock, and ran out of the pavilion. And when she saw her lord lie at the ground like to be dead, then she cried and wept as she had been mad. Then with her noise the knight awaked out of his swoon, and looked up weakly with his eyes; and then he asked her, where was that mad man that had given him such a buffet: For such a buffet had I never of man's hand. Sir, said the dwarf, it is not worship to hurt him, for he is a man out of his wit; and doubt ye not he hath been a man of great worship, and for some

heartly sorrow that he hath taken, he is fallen mad; and me beseemeth, said the dwarf, he resembleth much unto Sir Launcelot, for him I saw at the great tournament beside Lonazep. Jesu defend, said that knight, that ever that noble knight, Sir Launcelot, should be in such a plight; but whatsomever he be, said that knight, harm will I none do him: and this knight's name was Bliant. Then he said unto the dwarf: Go thou fast on horseback, unto my brother Sir Selivant, that is at the Castle Blank, and tell him of mine adventure, and bid him bring with him an horse litter, and then will we bear this knight unto my castle.

He is carried to a castle

CHAPTER II. How Sir Launcelot was carried in an horse litter, and how Sir Launcelot rescued Sir Bliant, his host. So the dwarf rode fast, and he came again and brought Sir Selivant with him, and six men with an horse litter; and so they took up the feather bed with Sir Launcelot, and so carried all away with them unto the Castle Blank, and he never awaked till he was within the castle. And then they bound his hands and his feet, and gave him good meats and good drinks, and brought him again to his strength and his fairness; but in his wit they could not bring him again, nor to know himself. Thus was Sir Launcelot there more than a year and a half, honestly arrayed and fair farne withal. Then upon a day this lord of that castle, Sir Bliant, took his arms, on horseback, with a spear, to seek adventures. And as he rode in a forest

and tenderly cared for

there met with him two knights adventurous, the one was Breuse Saunce Pité, and his brother, Sir Bertelot; and these two ran both at once upon Sir Bliant, and brake their spears upon his body. And then they drew out swords and made great battle, and fought long together. But at the last Sir Bliant was sore wounded, and felt himself faint; and then he fled on horseback toward his castle. And they came hurling under the castle whereas Sir Launcelot lay in a window, and saw how two knights laid upon Sir Bliant with their swords. And when Sir Launcelot saw that, yet as wood as he was he was sorry for his lord, Sir Bliant. And then Sir Launcelot brake the chains from his legs and off his arms, and in the breaking he hurt his hands sore; and so Sir Launcelot ran out at a postern, and there he met with the two knights that chased Sir Bliant; and there he pulled down Sir Bertelot with his bare hands from his horse, and therewithal he wrothe his sword out of his hand; and so he leapt unto Sir Breuse, and gave him such a buffet upon the head that he tumbled backward over his horse's croup. And when Sir Bertelot saw there his brother have such a fall, he gat a spear in his hand, and would have run Sir Launcelot through: that saw Sir Bliant, and struck off the hand of Sir Bertelot. And then Sir Breuse and Sir Bertelot gat their horses and fled away. When Sir Selivant came and saw what Sir Launcelot had done for his brother, then he thanked God, and so did his brother, that ever they did him any good. But

when Sir Bliant saw that Sir Launcelot was hurt with the breaking of his irons, then was he heavy that ever he bound him. Bind him no more, said Sir Selivant, for he is happy and gracious. Then they made great joy of Sir Launcelot, and they bound him no more; and so he abode there an half year and more. And on the morn early Sir Launcelot was ware where came a great boar with many hounds nigh him. But the boar was so big there might no hounds tear him; and the hunters came after, blowing their horns, both upon horseback and some upon foot; and then Sir Launcelot was ware where one alit and tied his horse to a tree, and leaned his spear against the tree.

He rescues his host

CHAPTER III. How Sir Launcelot fought against a boar and slew him, and how he was hurt, and brought unto an hermitage.

So came Sir Launcelot and found the horse bounden till a tree, and a spear leaning against a tree, and a sword tied to the saddle bow; and then Sir Launcelot leapt into the saddle and gat that spear in his hand, and then he rode after the boar; and then Sir Launcelot was ware where the boar set his arse to a tree fast by an hermitage. Then Sir Launcelot ran at the boar with his spear, and therewith the boar turned him nimbly, and rove out the lungs and the heart of the horse, so that Launcelot fell to the earth; and, or ever Sir Launcelot might get from the horse, the boar rove him on the brawn of the thigh up

He fights with a boar

to the hough bone. And then Sir Launcelot was wroth, and up he gat upon his feet, and drew his sword, and he smote off the boar's head at one stroke. And therewithal came out the hermit, and saw him have such a wound. Then the hermit came to Sir Launcelot and bemoaned him, and would have had him home unto his hermitage; but when Sir Launcelot heard him speak, he was so wroth with his wound that he ran upon the hermit to have slain him, and the hermit ran away. And when Sir Launcelot might not overget him, he threw his sword after him, for Sir Launcelot might go no further for bleeding; then the hermit turned again, and asked Sir Launcelot how he was hurt. Fellow, said Sir Launcelot, this boar hath bitten me sore. Then come with me, said the hermit, and I shall heal you. Go thy way, said Sir Launcelot, and deal not with me. Then the hermit ran his way, and there he met with a good knight with many men. Sir, said the hermit, here is fast by my place the goodliest man that ever I saw, and he is sore wounded with a boar, and yet he hath slain the boar. But well I wot, said the hermit, and he be not holpen, that goodly man shall die of that wound, and that were great pity. Then that knight at the desire of the hermit gat a cart, and in that cart that knight put the boar and Sir Launcelot, for Sir Launcelot was so feeble that they might right easily deal with him; and so Sir Launcelot was brought unto the hermitage, and there the hermit healed him

of his wound. But the hermit might not find Sir Launcelot's sustenance, and so he impaired and waxed feeble, both of his body and of his wit: for the default of his sustenance he waxed more wooder than he was aforehand. And then upon a day Sir Launcelot ran his way into the forest; and by adventure he came to the city of Corbin, where Dame Elaine was, that bare Galahad, Sir Launcelot's son. And so when he was entered into the town he ran through the town to the castle; and then all the young men of that city ran after Sir Launcelot, and there they threw turves at him, and gave him many sad strokes. And ever as Sir Launcelot might overreach any of them, he threw them so that they would never come in his hands no more; for of some he brake the legs and the arms, and so fled into the castle; and then came out knights and squires and rescued Sir Launcelot. And when they beheld him and looked upon his person, they thought they saw never so goodly a man. And when they saw so many wounds upon him, all they deemed that he had been a man of worship. And then they ordained him clothes to his body, and straw underneath him, and a little house. And then every day they would throw him meat, and set him drink, but there was but few would bring him meat to his hands.

and is sore hurt

Elaine recognises Launcelot

CHAPTER IV. How Sir Launcelot was known by Dame Elaine, and was borne into a chamber and after healed by the Sangreal. So it befell that King Pelles had a nephew, his name was Castor; and so he desired of the King to be made knight, and so at the request of this Castor the King made him knight at the feast of Candlemas. And when Sir Castor was made knight, that same day he gave many gowns. And then Sir Castor sent for the fool—that was Sir Launcelot. And when he was come afore Sir Castor, he gave Sir Launcelot a robe of scarlet and all that longed unto him. And when Sir Launcelot was so arrayed like a knight, he was the seemliest man in all the court, and none so well made. So when he saw his time he went into the garden, and there Sir Launcelot laid him down by a well and slept. And so at after noon Dame Elaine and her maidens came into the garden to play them; and as they roamed up and down one of Dame Elaine's maidens espied where lay a goodly man by the well sleeping, and anon showed him to Dame Elaine. Peace, said Dame Elaine, and say no word: and then she brought Dame Elaine where he lay. And when that she beheld him, anon she fell in remembrance of him, and knew him verily for Sir Launcelot; and therewithal she fell a-weeping so heartily that she sank even to the earth; and when she had thus wept a great while, then she arose and called her maidens and said she was sick. And so she yede out of the garden, and she

went straight to her father, and there she took him apart by herself; and then she said: O father, now have I need of your help, and but if that ye help me farewell my good days for ever. What is that, daughter? said King Pelles. Sir, she said, thus is it: in your garden I went for to sport, and there by the well I found Sir Launcelot du Lake sleeping. I may not believe that, said King Pelles. Sir, she said, truly he is there, and meseemeth he should be distract out of his wit. Then hold you still, said the king, and let me deal. Then the king called to him such as he most trusted, a four persons, and Dame Elaine, his daughter. And when they came to the well and beheld Sir Launcelot, anon Dame Brisen knew him. Sir, said Dame Brisen, we must be wise how we deal with him, for this knight is out of his mind, and if we awake him rudely what he will do we all know not; but ye shall abide, and I shall throw such an enchantment upon him that he shall not awake within the space of an hour; and so she did. Then within a little while after, the King commanded that all people should avoid, that none should be in that way thereas the king would come. And so when this was done, these four men and these ladies laid hand on Sir Launcelot, and so they bare him into a tower, and so into a chamber where was the Holy vessel of the Sangreal, and by force Sir Launcelot was laid by that holy vessel; and there came an holy man and unhilled that vessel, and so by miracle and by virtue of that holy vessel Sir

He is borne into a tower

and healed by the Sangreal

Launcelot was healed and recovered. And when that he was awaked he groaned and sighed, and complained greatly that he was passing sore.

CHAPTER V. How Sir Launcelot, after that he was whole and had his mind, he was ashamed, and how that Elaine desired a castle for him. And when Sir Launcelot saw King Pelles and Elaine, he waxed ashamed and said thus: O Lord Jesu, how I came here? for God's sake, my lord, let me wit how I came here. Sir, said Dame Elaine, into this country ye came like a madman, clean out of your wit, and here have ye been kept as a fool; and no creature here knew what ye were, until by fortune a maiden of mine brought me unto you whereas ye lay sleeping by a well, and anon as I verily beheld you I knew you. And then I told my father, and so were ye brought afore this holy vessel, and by the virtue of it thus were ye healed. O Jesu, mercy, said Sir Launcelot; if this be sooth, how many there be that know of my woodness? So God me help, said Elaine, no more but my father, and I, and Dame Brisen. Now for Christ's love, said Sir Launcelot, keep it in counsel, and let no man know it in the world, for I am sore ashamed that I have been thus miscarried; for I am banished out of the country of Logris forever, that is for to say the country of England. And so Sir Launcelot lay more than a fortnight or ever that he might stir for soreness. And then upon a day he said unto Dame Elaine

these words: Lady Elaine, for your sake I have had much travail, care, and anguish, it needeth not to rehearse it, ye know how. Notwithstanding I know well I have done foul to you when that I drew my sword to you, to have slain you, upon the morn when I had lain with you. And all was the cause, that ye and Dame Brisen made me for to lie by you maugre mine head; and as ye say, that night Galahad your son was begotten. That is truth, said Dame Elaine. Now will ye for my love, said Sir Launcelot, go unto your father and get me a place of him wherein I may dwell? for in the court of King Arthur may I never come. Sir, said Dame Elaine, I will live and die with you, and only for your sake; and if my life might not avail you and my death might avail you, wit you well I would die for your sake. And I will go to my father, and I am sure there is nothing that I can desire of him but I shall have it. And where ye be, my lord Sir Launcelot, doubt ye not but I will be with you with all the service that I may do. So forthwithal she went to her father and said, Sir, my lord, Sir Launcelot, desireth to be here by you in some castle of yours. Well daughter, said the king, sith it is his desire to abide in these marches he shall be in the Castle of Bliant, and there shall ye be with him, and twenty of the fairest ladies that be in the country, and they shall all be of the great blood, and ye shall have ten knights with you; for, daughter, I will that ye wit we all be honoured by the blood of Sir Launcelot.

He asks a castle

Le Chevaler Mal Fet

CHAPTER VI. How Sir Launcelot came into the Joyous Isle, and there he named himself Le Chevaler Mal Fet. Then went Dame Elaine unto Sir Launcelot, and told him all how her father had devised for him and her. Then came the knight Sir Castor, that was nephew unto King Pelles, unto Sir Launcelot, and asked him what was his name. Sir, said Sir Launcelot, my name is Le Chevaler Mal Fet, that is to say the knight that hath trespassed. Sir, said Sir Castor, it may well be so, but ever meseemeth your name should be Sir Launcelot du Lake, for or now I have seen you. Sir, said Launcelot, ye are not as a gentle knight: I put case my name were Sir Launcelot, and that it list me not to discover my name, what should it grieve you here to keep my counsel, and ye be not hurt thereby? but wit thou well an ever it lie in my power I shall grieve you, and that I promise you truly. Then Sir Castor kneeled down and besought Sir Launcelot of mercy: For I shall never utter what ye be while that ye be in these parts. Then Sir Launcelot pardoned him. And then after this King Pelles with ten knights, and Dame Elaine, and twenty ladies, rode unto the Castle of Bliant that stood in an island beclosed in iron, with a fair water deep and large. And when they were there Sir Launcelot let call it the Joyous Isle; and there was he called none otherwise but Le Chevaler Mal Fet, the knight that hath trespassed. Then Sir Launcelot let make him a shield all of sable, and a queen crowned in the midst, all of silver, and a knight

clean armed kneeling afore her. And every day once, for any mirths that all the ladies might make him, he would once every day look toward the realm of Logris, where King Arthur and Queen Guenever was. And then would he fall upon a weeping as his heart should to-brast. So it fell that time Sir Launcelot heard of a jousting fast by his castle, within three leagues. Then he called unto him a dwarf, and he bade him go unto that jousting: And or ever the knights depart, look thou make there a cry, in hearing of all the knights, that there is one knight in the Joyous Isle, that is the Castle of Bliant, and say his name is Le Chevaler Mal Fet, that will joust against knights that will come. And who that putteth that knight to the worse shall have a fair maid and a ger-falcon.

The Joyous Isle

CHAPTER VII. Of a great tourneying in the Joyous Isle, and how Sir Percivale and Sir Ector came thither, and Sir Percivale fought with him. So when this cry was made, unto Joyous Isle drew knights to the number of five hundred; and wit ye well there was never seen in Arthur's days one knight that did so much deeds of arms as Sir Launcelot did three days together; for as the book maketh truly mention, he had the better of all the five hundred knights, and there was not one slain of them. And after that Sir Launcelot made them all a great feast. And in the meanwhile came Sir Percivale de Galis and Sir Ector de Maris under that castle that

The tournament at Joyous Isle

was called the Joyous Isle. And as they beheld that gay castle they would have gone to that castle, but they might not for the broad water, and bridge could they find none. Then they saw on the other side a lady with a sperhawk in her hand, and Sir Percivale called unto her, and asked that lady who was in that castle. Fair knights, she said, here within this castle is the fairest lady in this land, and her name is Elaine. Also we have in this castle the fairest knight and the mightiest man that is I dare say living, and he called himself Le Chevaler Mal Fet. How came he into these marches? said Sir Percivale. Truly, said the damosel, he came into this country like a mad man, with dogs and boys chasing him through the city of Corbin, and by the holy vessel of the Sangreal he was brought into his wit again; but he will not do battle with no knight, but by underne or by noon. And if ye list to come into the castle, said the lady, ye must ride unto the further side of the castle and there shall ye find a vessel that will bear you and your horse. Then they departed, and came unto the vessel. And then Sir Percivale alit, and said to Sir Ector de Maris: Ye shall abide me here until that I wit what manner a knight he is; for it were shame unto us, inasmuch as he is but one knight, an we should both do battle with him. Do ye as ye list, said Sir Ector, and here I shall abide you until that I hear of you. Then passed Sir Percivale the water, and when he came to the castle gate he bade the porter: Go thou to the good knight within the castle, and

tell him here is come an errant knight to joust with him. Sir, said the porter, ride ye within the castle, and there is a common place for jousting, that lords and ladies may behold you. So anon as Sir Launcelot had warning he was soon ready; and there Sir Percivale and Sir Launcelot encountered with such a might, and their spears were so rude, that both the horses and the knights fell to the earth. Then they avoided their horses, and flang out noble swords, and hewed away cantels of their shields, and hurtled together with their shields like two boars, and either wounded other passing sore. At the last Sir Percivale spake first when they had foughten there more than two hours. Fair knight, said Sir Percivale, I require thee tell me thy name, for I met never with such a knight. Sir, said Sir Launcelot, my name is Le Chevaler Mal Fet. Now tell me your name, said Sir Launcelot, I require you, gentle knight. Truly, said Sir Percivale, my name is Sir Percivale de Galis, that was brother unto the good knight, Sir Lamorak de Galis, and King Pellinore was our father, and Sir Aglovale is my brother. Alas, said Sir Launcelot, what have I done to fight with you that art a knight of the Round Table, that sometime was your fellow?

Launcelot jousts with Percivale

CHAPTER VIII. How each of them knew other, and of their great courtesy, and how his brother Sir Ector came unto him, and of their joy. And therewithal Sir Launcelot kneeled down upon his knees, and threw

Sir Ector comes to him

away his shield and his sword from him. When Sir Percivale saw him do so he marvelled what he meant. And then thus he said: Sir knight, whatsomever thou be, I require thee upon the high order of knighthood, tell me thy true name. Then he said: So God me help, my name is Sir Launcelot du Lake, King Ban's son of Benoy. Alas, said Sir Percivale, what have I done? I was sent by the Queen for to seek you, and so I have sought you nigh this two year, and yonder is Sir Ector de Maris, your brother, abideth me on the other side of the yonder water. Now, for God's sake, said Sir Percivale, forgive me mine offences that I have here done. It is soon forgiven, said Sir Launcelot. Then Sir Percivale sent for Sir Ector de Maris; and when Sir Launcelot had a sight of him, he ran unto him and took him in his arms; and then Sir Ector kneeled down, and either wept upon other, that all had pity to behold them. Then came Dame Elaine, and she there made them great cheer as might lie in her power; and there she told Sir Ector and Sir Percivale how and in what manner Sir Launcelot came into that country, and how he was healed; and there it was known how long Sir Launcelot was with Sir Bliant and with Sir Selivant, and how he first met with them, and how he departed from them because of a boar; and how the hermit healed Sir Launcelot of his great wound, and how that he came to Corbin.

CHAPTER IX. How Sir Bors and Sir Lionel came to King Brandegore, and how Sir Bors took his son Helin le Blank, and of Sir Launcelot. Now leave we Sir Launcelot in the Joyous Isle with the Lady Dame Elaine, and Sir Percivale and Sir Ector playing with them, and turn we to Sir Bors de Ganis and Sir Lionel, that had sought Sir Launcelot nigh by the space of two year, and never could they hear of him. And as they thus rode, by adventure they came to the house of Brandegore, and there Sir Bors was well known, for he had gotten a child upon the king's daughter fifteen year tofore, and his name was Helin le Blank. And when Sir Bors saw that child it liked him passing well. And so those knights had good cheer of the King Brandegore. And on the morn Sir Bors came afore King Brandegore and said: Here is my son Helin le Blank, that as it is said he is my son; and sith it is so, I will that ye wit that I will have him with me unto the court of King Arthur. Sir, said the king, ye may well take him with you, but he is over tender of age. As for that, said Sir Bors, I will have him with me, and bring him to the house of most worship of the world. So when Sir Bors should depart there was made great sorrow for the departing of Helin le Blank, and great weeping was there made. But Sir Bors and Sir Lionel departed, and within a while they came to Camelot, where was King Arthur. And when King Arthur understood that Helin le Blank

Helin le Blank

Launcelot rides to Arthur's court

was Sir Bors' son, and nephew unto King Brandegore, then King Arthur let him make knight of the Round Table; and so he proved a good knight and an adventurous. Now will we turn to our matter of Sir Launcelot. It befell upon a day Sir Ector and Sir Percivale came to Sir Launcelot and asked him what he would do, and whether he would go with them unto King Arthur or not. Nay, said Sir Launcelot, that may not be by no mean, for I was so entreated at the court that I cast me never to come there more. Sir, said Sir Ector, I am your brother, and ye are the man in the world that I love most; and if I understood that it were your disworship, ye may understand I would never counsel you thereto; but King Arthur and all his knights, and in especial Queen Guenever, made such dole and sorrow that it was marvel to hear and see. And ye must remember the great worship and renown that ye be of, how that ye have been more spoken of than any other knight that is now living; for there is none that beareth the name now but ye and Sir Tristram. Therefore brother, said Sir Ector, make you ready to ride to the court with us, and I daresay there was never knight better welcome to the court than ye; and I wot well and can make it good, said Sir Ector, it hath cost my lady, the Queen, twenty thousand pound the seeking of you. Well brother, said Sir Launcelot, I will do after your counsel, and ride with you. So then they took their horses and made them ready, and took their

leave at King Pelles and at Dame Elaine. And when Sir Launcelot should depart Dame Elaine made great sorrow. My lord, Sir Launcelot, said Dame Elaine, at this same feast of Pentecost shall your son and mine, Galahad, be made knight, for he is fully now fifteen winter old. Do as ye list, said Sir Launcelot; God give him grace to prove a good knight. As for that, said Dame Elaine, I doubt not he shall prove the best man of his kin except one. Then shall he be a man good enough, said Sir Launcelot.

He comes to Camelot

CHAPTER X. How Sir Launcelot with Sir Percivale and Sir Ector came to the court, and of the great joy of him. Then they departed, and within five days' journey they came to Camelot, that is called in English, Winchester. And when Sir Launcelot was come among them, the King and all the knights made great joy of him. And there Sir Percivale de Galis and Sir Ector de Maris began and told the whole adventures: that Sir Launcelot had been out of his mind the time of his absence, and how he called himself Le Chevaler Mal Fet, the knight that had trespassed; and in three days Sir Launcelot smote down five hundred knights. And ever as Sir Ector and Sir Percivale told these tales of Sir Launcelot, Queen Guenever wept as she should have died. Then the Queen made great cheer. O Jesu, said King Arthur, I marvel for what cause ye, Sir Launcelot, went out of your mind. I and many others deem

Great joy at his coming

it was for the love of fair Elaine, the daughter of King Pelles, by whom ye are noised that ye have gotten a child, and his name is Galahad, and men say he shall do marvels. My lord, said Sir Launcelot, if I did any folly I have that I sought. And therewithal the king spake no more. But all Sir Launcelot's kin knew for whom he went out of his mind. And then there were great feasts made and great joy; and many great lords and ladies, when they heard that Sir Launcelot was come to the court again, they made great joy.

CHAPTER XI. How La Beale Isoud counselled Sir Tristram to go unto the court, to the great feast of Pentecost. Now will we leave off this matter, and speak we of Sir Tristram, and of Sir Palomides that was the Saracen unchristened. When Sir Tristram was come home unto Joyous Gard from his adventures, all this while that Sir Launcelot was thus missed, two year and more, Sir Tristram bare the renown through all the realm of Logris, and many strange adventures befell him, and full well and manly and worshipfully he brought them to an end. So when he was come home La Beale Isoud told him of the great feast that should be at Pentecost next following, and there she told him how Sir Launcelot had been missed two year, and all that while he had been out of his mind, and how he was holpen by the holy vessel, the Sangreal. Alas, said Sir Tristram, that caused some debate betwixt him and Queen Guenever. Sir,

said Dame Isoud, I know it all, for Queen Guenever sent me a letter in the which she wrote me all how it was, for to require you to seek him. And now, blessed be God, said La Beale Isoud, he is whole and sound and come again to the court. Thereof am I glad, said Sir Tristram, and now shall ye and I make us ready, for both ye and I will be at the feast. Sir, said Isoud, an it please you I will not be there, for through me ye be marked of many good knights, and that caused you to have much more labour for my sake than needeth you. Then will I not be there, said Sir Tristram, but if ye be there. God defend, said La Beale Isoud, for then shall I be spoken of shame among all queens and ladies of estate; for ye that are called one of the noblest knights of the world, and ye a knight of the Round Table, how may ye be missed at that feast? What shall be said among all knights? See how Sir Tristram hunteth, and hawketh, and cowereth within a castle with his lady, and forsaketh your worship. Alas, shall some say, it is pity that ever he was made knight, or that ever he should have the love of a lady. Also what shall queens and ladies say of me? It is pity that I have my life, that I will hold so noble a knight as ye are from his worship. So God me help, said Sir Tristram unto La Beale Isoud, it is passing well said of you and nobly counselled; and now I well understand that ye love me; and like as ye have counselled me I will do a part thereafter. But there shall no man nor child ride with me, but myself. And so will I

Isoud's counsel to Tristram

Tristram meets Palomides

ride on Tuesday next coming, and no more harness of war but my spear and my sword.

CHAPTER XII. How Sir Tristram departed unarmed and met with Sir Palomides, and how they smote each other, and how Sir Palomides forbare him. And so when the day came Sir Tristram took his leave at La Beale Isoud, and she sent with him four knights, and within half a mile he sent them again: and within a mile after Sir Tristram saw afore him where Sir Palomides had stricken down a knight, and almost wounded him to the death. Then Sir Tristram repented him that he was not armed, and then he hoved still. With that Sir Palomides knew Sir Tristram, and cried on high: Sir Tristram, now be we met, for or we depart we will redress our old sores. As for that, said Sir Tristram, there was yet never Christian man might make his boast that ever I fled from him; and wit ye well, Sir Palomides, thou that art a Saracen shall never make thy boast that Sir Tristram de Liones shall flee from thee. And therewith Sir Tristram made his horse to run, and with all his might he came straight upon Sir Palomides, and brast his spear upon him an hundred pieces. And forthwithal Sir Tristram drew his sword. And then he turned his horse and struck at Palomides six great strokes upon his helm; and then Sir Palomides stood still, and beheld Sir Tristram, and marvelled of his woodness, and of his folly. And then Sir Palomides said to himself: An Sir Tristram

were armed, it were hard to seace him of this battle, and if I turn again and slay him I am ashamed wheresomever that I go. Then Sir Tristram spake and said: Thou coward knight, what castest thou to do; why wilt thou not do battle with me? for have thou no doubt I shall endure all thy malice. Ah, Sir Tristram, said Palomides, full well thou wotest I may not fight with thee for shame, for thou art here naked and I am armed, and if I slay thee, dishonour shall be mine. And well thou wotest, said Sir Palomides to Sir Tristram, I know thy strength and thy hardiness to endure against a good knight. That is truth, said Sir Tristram, I understand thy valiantness well. Ye say well, said Sir Palomides; now, I require you, tell me a question that I shall say to you. Tell me what it is, said Sir Tristram, and I shall answer you the truth, as God me help. I put case, said Sir Palomides, that ye were armed at all rights as well as I am, and I naked as ye be, what would you do to me now, by your true knighthood? Ah, said Sir Tristram, now I understand thee well, Sir Palomides, for now must I say mine own judgment, and as God me bless, that I shall say shall not be said for no fear that I have of thee. But this is all: wit Sir Palomides, as at this time thou shouldest depart from me, for I would not have ado with thee. No more will I, said Palomides, and therefore ride forth on thy way. As for that I may choose, said Sir Tristram, either to ride or to abide. But Sir Palomides, said Sir Tristram, I marvel of one

They parley

Sir Galleron of Galway

thing, that thou that art so good a knight, that thou wilt not be christened, and thy brother, Sir Safere, hath been christened many a day.

CHAPTER XIII. How that Sir Tristram gat him harness of a knight which was hurt, and how he overthrew Sir Palomides.

As for that, said Sir Palomides, I may not yet be christened, for one avow that I have made many years agone; howbeit in my heart I believe in Jesu Christ and his mild mother Mary; but I have but one battle to do, and when that is done I will be baptised with a good will. By my head, said Tristram, as for one battle thou shalt not seek it no longer. For God defend, said Sir Tristram, that through my default thou shouldst longer live thus a Saracen, for yonder is a knight that ye, Sir Palomides, have hurt and smitten down. Now help me that I were armed in his armour, and I shall soon fulfil thine avows. As ye will, said Palomides, so it shall be. So they rode both unto that knight that sat upon a bank, and then Sir Tristram saluted him, and he weakly saluted him again. Sir knight, said Sir Tristram, I require you tell me your right name. Sir, he said, my name is Sir Galleron of Galway, and knight of the Table Round. So God me help, said Sir Tristram, I am right heavy of your hurts; but this is all, I must pray you to lend me all your whole armour, for ye see I am unarmed, and I must do battle with this knight. Sir, said the hurt knight, ye shall have it with a good will; but ye must beware,

for I warn you that knight is wight. Sir, said Galleron, I pray you tell me your name, and what is that knight's name that hath beaten me. Sir, as for my name it is Sir Tristram de Liones, and as for the knight's name that hath hurt you is Sir Palomides, brother to the good knight Sir Safere, and yet is Sir Palomides unchristened. Alas, said Sir Galleron, that is pity that so good a knight and so noble a man of arms should be unchristened. So God me help, said Sir Tristram, either he shall slay me or I him but that he shall be christened or ever we depart in-sunder. My lord Sir Tristram, said Sir Galleron, your renown and worship is well known through many realms, and God save you this day from shenship and shame. Then Sir Tristram unarmed Galleron, the which was a noble knight, and had done many deeds of arms, and he was a large knight of flesh and bone. And when he was unarmed he stood upon his feet, for he was bruised in the back with a spear; yet so as Sir Galleron might, he armed Sir Tristram. And then Sir Tristram mounted upon his own horse, and in his hand he gat Sir Galleron's spear; and therewithal Sir Palomides was ready. And so they came hurtling together, and either smote other in middes of their shields; and therewithal Sir Palomides' spear brake, and Sir Tristram smote down the horse; and Sir Palomides as soon as he might avoided his horse, and dressed his shield, and pulled out his sword. That saw Sir Tristram, and therewithal he alit and tied his horse till a tree.

Tristram borrows armour

and fights with Palomides

CHAPTER XIV. How Sir Tristram and Sir Palomides fought long together, and after accorded, and how Sir Tristram made him to be christened. And then they came together as two wild boars, lashing together, tracing and traversing as noble men that oft had been well proved in battle; but ever Sir Palomides dread the might of Sir Tristram, and therefore he suffered him to breathe him. Thus they fought more than two hours, but often Sir Tristram smote such strokes at Sir Palomides that he made him to kneel; and Sir Palomides brake and cut away many pieces of Sir Tristram's shield; and then Sir Palomides wounded Sir Tristram, for he was a well fighting man. Then Sir Tristram was wood wroth out of measure, and rushed upon Sir Palomides with such a might that Sir Palomides fell grovelling to the earth; and therewithal he leapt up lightly upon his feet, and then Sir Tristram wounded Palomides sore through the shoulder. And ever Sir Tristram fought still in like hard, and Sir Palomides failed not, but gave him many sad strokes. And at the last Sir Tristram doubled his strokes, and by fortune Sir Tristram smote Sir Palomides' sword out of his hand, and if Sir Palomides had stooped for his sword he had been slain. Then Palomides stood still and beheld his sword with a sorrowful heart. How now, said Sir Tristram unto Palomides, now have I thee at advantage as thou haddest me this day; but it shall never be said in no court, nor among good knights, that Sir Tristram shall slay any knight that is

weaponless; and therefore take thou thy sword, and let us make an end of this battle. As for to do this battle, said Palomides, I dare right well end it, but I have no great lust to fight no more. And for this cause, said Palomides: mine offence to you is not so great but that we may be friends. All that I have offended is and was for the love of La Beale Isoud. And as for her, I dare say she is peerless above all other ladies, and also I proffered her never no dishonour; and by her I have gotten the most part of my worship, and sithen I offended never as to her own person. And as for the offence that I have done, it was against your own person, and for that offence ye have given me this day many sad strokes, and some I have given you again; and now I dare say I felt never man of your might, nor so well breathed, but if it were Sir Launcelot du Lake. Wherefore I require you, my lord, forgive me all that I have offended unto you; and this same day have me to the next church, and first let me be clean confessed, and after see you now that I be truly baptised. And then will we all ride together unto the court of Arthur, that we be there at the high feast. Now take your horse, said Sir Tristram, and as ye say so it shall be, and all thine evil will God forgive it you, and I do. And here within this mile is the Suffragan of Carlisle that shall give you the sacrament of baptism. Then they took their horses and Sir Galleron rode with them. And when they came to the Suffragan Sir Tristram told him their desire. Then the Suffragan let fill a great

Palomides asks Tristram for forgiveness

Palomides christened

vessel with water, and when he had hallowed it he then confessed clean Sir Palomides, and Sir Tristram and Sir Galleron were his godfathers. And then soon after they departed, riding toward Camelot, where King Arthur and Queen Guenever was, and for the most part all the knights of the Round Table. And so the King and all he court were glad that Sir Palomides was christened. And at the same feast in came Galahad and sat in the Siege Perilous. And so therewithal departed and dissevered all the knights of the Round Table. And Sir Tristram returned again unto Joyous Gard, and Sir Palomides followed the questing beast.

Here endeth the second book of Sir Tristram that was drawn out of French into English. But here is no rehearsal of the third book. And here followeth the noble tale of the Sangreal, that called is the Holy Vessel; and the signification of the blessed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, blessed mote it be, the which was brought into this land by Joseph of Aramathie. Therefore on all sinful souls blessed Lord have thou mercy.

Explicit liber xii. Et incipit Decimustercius.

BOOK XIII

CHAPTER I. How at the vigil of the Feast of Pentecost entered into the hall before King Arthur a damosel, and desired Sir Launcelot for to come and dub a knight, and how he went with her. At the vigil of Pentecost, when all the fellowship of the Round Table were come unto Camelot and there heard their service, and the tables were set ready to the meat, right so entered into the hall a full fair gentlewoman on horseback, that had ridden full fast, for her horse was all besweated. Then she there alit, and came before the King and saluted him; and he said: Damosel, God thee bless. Sir, said she, for God's sake say me where Sir Launcelot is. Yonder ye may see him, said the King. Then she went unto Launcelot and said: Sir Launcelot, I salute you on King Pelles' behalf, and I require you come on with me hereby into a forest. Then Sir Launcelot asked her with whom she dwelled. I dwell, said she, with King Pelles. What will ye with me? said Launcelot. Ye shall know, said she, when ye come thither. Well, said he, I will gladly go with you. So Sir Launcelot bade his squire saddle his horse and bring his arms; and in all haste he did his commandment. Then came the Queen unto Launcelot, and said: Will ye leave us at this high feast? Madam, said the gentlewoman,

The vigil of Pentecost

Launcelot taken to the abbey of nuns

wit ye well he shall be with you to-morn by dinner time. If I wist, said the Queen, that he should not be with us here to-morn he should not go with you by my good will. Right so departed Sir Launcelot with the gentlewoman, and rode until that he came into a forest and into a great valley, where they saw an abbey of nuns; and there was a squire ready and opened the gates, and so they entered and descended off their horses; and there came a fair fellowship about Sir Launcelot, and welcomed him, and were passing glad of his coming. And then they led him unto the Abbess's chamber and unarmed him; and right so he was ware upon a bed lying two of his cousins, Sir Bors and Sir Lionel, and then he waked them; and when they saw him they made great joy. Sir, said Sir Bors unto Sir Launcelot, what adventure hath brought you hither, for we weened to-morn to have found you at Camelot? As God me help, said Sir Launcelot, a gentlewoman brought me hither, but I know not the cause. In the meanwhile that they thus stood talking together, therein came twelve nuns that brought with them Galahad, the which was passing fair and well made, that unnethe in the world men might not find his match: and all those ladies wept. Sir, said they all, we bring you here this child the which we have nourished, and we pray you to make him a knight, for of a more worthier man's hand may he not receive the order of knighthood. Sir Launcelot beheld the young squire and saw him seemly and demure as a dove, with all manner of good features,

that he weened of his age never to have seen so fair a man of form. Then said Sir Launcelot: Cometh this desire of himself? He and all they said yea. Then shall he, said Sir Launcelot, receive the high order of knighthood as tomorn at the reverence of the high feast. That night Sir Launcelot had passing good cheer; and on the morn at the hour of prime, at Galahad's desire, he made him knight and said: God make him a good man, for of beauty faileth you not as any that liveth.

He dubs Galahad knight

CHAPTER II. How the letters were found written in the Siege Perilous, and of the marvellous adventure of the sword in a stone. Now fair sir, said Sir Launcelot, will ye come with me unto the court of King Arthur? Nay, said he, I will not go with you as at this time. Then he departed from them and took his two cousins with him, and so they came unto Camelot by the hour of underne on Whitsunday. By that time the King and the Queen were gone to the minster to hear their service. Then the King and the Queen were passing glad of Sir Bors and Sir Lionel, and so was all the fellowship. So when the King and all the knights were come from service, the barons espied in the sieges of the Round Table all about, written with golden letters: Here ought to sit he, and he ought to sit here. And thus they went so long till that they came to the Siege Perilous, where they found letters newly written of gold which said: Four hundred winters and four and fifty

The writing in the Siege Perilous

accomplished after the passion of our Lord Jesu Christ ought this siege to be fulfilled. Then all they said: This is a marvellous thing and an adventurous. In the name of God, said Sir Launcelot; and then accounted the term of the writing from the birth of our Lord unto that day. It seemeth me, said Sir Launcelot, this siege ought to be fulfilled this same day, for this is the feast of Pentecost after the four hundred and four and fifty year; and if it would please all parties, I would none of these letters were seen this day, till he be come that ought to achieve this adventure. Then made they to ordain a cloth of silk, for to cover these letters in the Siege Perilous. Then the King bade haste unto dinner. Sir, said Sir Kay the Steward, if ye go now to your meat ye shall break your old custom of your court, for ye have not used on this day to sit at your meat or that ye have seen some adventure. Ye say sooth, said the King, but I had so great joy of Sir Launcelot and of his cousins, which be come to the court whole and sound, so that I bethought me not of mine old custom. So, as they stood speaking, in came a squire and said unto the King: Sir, I bring unto you marvellous tidings. What be they? said the king. Sir, there is here beneath at the river a great stone which I saw fleet above the water, and therein I saw sticking a sword. The king said: I will see that marvel. So all the knights went with him, and when they came to the river they found there a stone fleeting, as it were of red marble, and therein stuck a fair rich sword,

and in the pommel thereof were precious stones wrought with subtle letters of gold. Then the barons read the letters which said in this wise: Never shall man take me hence, but only he by whose side I ought to hang, and he shall be the best knight of the world. When the King had seen the letters, he said unto Sir Launcelot: Fair Sir, this sword ought to be yours, for I am sure ye be the best knight of the world. Then Sir Launcelot answered full soberly: Certes, sir, it is not my sword; also, Sir, wit ye well I have no hardiness to set my hand to it, for it longed not to hang by my side. Also, who that assayeth to take the sword and faileth of it, he shall receive a wound by that sword that he shall not be whole long after. And I will that ye wit that this same day shall the adventures of the Sangreal, that is called the Holy Vessel, begin.

The sword in the stone

CHAPTER III. How Sir Gawaine assayed to draw out the sword, and how an old man brought in Galahad. Now, fair nephew, said the king unto Sir Gawaine, assay ye, for my love. Sir, he said, save your good grace I shall not do that. Sir, said the king, assay to take the sword and at my commandment. Sir, said Gawaine, your commandment I will obey. And therewith he took up the sword by the handles, but he might not stir it. I thank you, said the king to Sir Gawaine. My lord Sir Gawaine, said Sir Launcelot, now wit ye well this sword shall touch you so sore that ye shall will ye had never set your hand

Galahad brought to Arthur

thereto for the best castle of this realm. Sir, he said, I might not withsay mine uncle's will and commandment. But when the King heard this he repented it much, and said unto Sir Percivale that he should assay, for his love. And he said: Gladly, for to bear Sir Gawaine fellowship. And therewith he set his hand on the sword and drew it strongly, but he might not move it. Then were there more that durst be so hardy to set their hands thereto. Now may ye go to your dinner, said Sir Kay unto the King, for a marvellous adventure have ye seen. So the King and all went unto the court, and every knight knew his own place, and set him therein, and young men that were knights served them. So when they were served, and all sieges fulfilled save only the Siege Perilous, anon there befell a marvellous adventure, that all the doors and windows of the palace shut by themself. Not for then the hall was not greatly darked; and therewith they abashed both one and other. Then King Arthur spake first and said: By God, fair fellows and lords, we have seen this day marvels, but or night I suppose we shall see greater marvels. In the meanwhile came in a good old man, and an ancient, clothed all in white, and there was no knight knew from whence he came. And with him he brought a young knight, both on foot, in red arms, without sword or shield, save a scabbard hanging by his side. And these words he said: Peace be with you, fair lords. Then the old man said unto Arthur: Sir, I bring here a

young knight, the which is of king's lineage, and of the kindred of Joseph of Aramathie, whereby the marvels of this court, and of strange realms, shall be fully accomplished.

Galahad in the Siege Perilous

CHAPTER IV. How the old man brought Galahad to the Siege Perilous and set him therein, and how all the knights marvelled.

The King was right glad of his words, and said unto the good man: Sir, ye be right welcome, and the young knight with you. Then the old man made the young man to unarm him, and he was in a coat of red sendel, and bare a mantle upon his shoulder that was furred with ermine, and put that upon him. And the old knight said unto the young knight: Sir, follow me. And anon he led him unto the Siege Perilous, where beside sat Sir Launcelot; and the good man lift up the cloth, and found there letters that said thus: This is the siege of Galahad, the haut prince. Sir, said the old knight, wit ye well that place is yours. And then he set him down surely in that siege. And then he said to the old man: Sir, ye may now go your way, for well have ye done that ye were commanded to do; and recommend me unto my grandsire, King Pelles, and unto my lord Petchere, and say them on my behalf, I shall come and see them as soon as ever I may. So the good man departed; and there met him twenty noble squires, and so took their horses and went their way. Then all the knights of the Table Round marvelled greatly of Sir Galahad, that

Arthur welcomes Galahad

he durst sit there in that Siege Perilous, and was so tender of age; and wist not from whence he came but all only by God; and said: This is he by whom the Sangreal shall be achieved, for there sat never none but he, but he were mischieved. Then Sir Launcelot beheld his son and had great joy of him. Then Bors told his fellows: Upon pain of my life this young knight shall come unto great worship. This noise was great in all the court, so that it came to the Queen. Then she had marvel what knight it might be that durst adventure him to sit in the Siege Perilous. Many said unto the Queen he resembled much unto Sir Launcelot. I may well suppose, said the Queen, that Sir Launcelot begat him on King Pelles' daughter, by the which he was made to lie-by, by enchantment, and his name is Galahad. I would fain see him, said the Queen, for he must needs be a noble man, for so is his father that him begat, I report me unto all the Table Round. So when the meat was done that the King and all were risen, the King yede unto the Siege Perilous and lift up the cloth, and found there the name of Galahad; and then he shewed it unto Sir Gawaine, and said: Fair nephew, now have we among us Sir Galahad, the good knight that shall worship us all; and upon pain of my life he shall achieve the Sangreal, right as Sir Launcelot had done us to understand. Then came King Arthur unto Galahad and said: Sir, ye be welcome, for ye shall move many good knights to the quest of the Sangreal, and ye

shall achieve that never knights might bring to an end. Then the King took him by the hand, and went down from the palace to shew Galahad the adventures of the stone.

Galahad achieves the sword

CHAPTER V. How King Arthur shewed the stone hoving on the water to Galahad, and how he drew out the sword. The Queen heard thereof, and came after with many ladies, and shewed them the stone where it hoved on the water. Sir, said the King unto Sir Galahad, here is a great marvel as ever I saw, and right good knights have assayed and failed. Sir, said Galahad, that is no marvel, for this adventure is not theirs but mine; and for the surety of this sword I brought none with me, for here by my side hangeth the scabbard. And anon he laid his hand on the sword, and lightly drew it out of the stone, and put it in the sheath, and said unto the King: Now it goeth better than it did aforehand. Sir, said the King, a shield God shall send you. Now have I that sword that sometime was the good knight's, Balin le Savage, and he was a passing good man of his hands; and with this sword he slew his brother Balan, and that was great pity, for he was a good knight, and either slew other through a dolorous stroke that Balin gave unto my grandfather King Pelles, the which is not yet whole, nor not shall be till I heal him. Therewith the King and all espied where came riding down the river a lady on a white palfrey toward them. Then she saluted the King and the Queen, and asked if that Sir Launcelot was

The best knight of the world

there. And then he answered himself: I am here, fair lady. Then she said all with weeping: How your great doing is changed sith this day in the morn. Damosel, why say you so? said Launcelot. I say you sooth, said the damosel, for ye were this day the best knight of the world, but who should say so now, he should be a liar, for there is now one better than ye, and well it is proved by the adventures of the sword whereto ye durst not set to your hand; and that is the change and leaving of your name. Wherefore I make unto you a remembrance, that ye shall not ween from henceforth that ye be the best knight of the world. As touching unto that, said Launcelot, I know well I was never the best. Yes, said the damosel, that were ye, and are yet, of any sinful man of the world. And, Sir king, Nacien, the hermit, sendeth thee word, that thee shall befall the greatest worship that ever befell king in Britain; and I say you wherefore, for this day the Sangreal appeared in thy house and feed thee and all thy fellowship of the Round Table. So she departed and went that same way that she came.

CHAPTER VI. How King Arthur had all the knights together for to joust in the meadow beside Camelot or they departed.

Now, said the King, I am sure at this quest of the Sangreal shall all ye of the Table Round depart, and never shall I see you again whole together; therefore I will see you all whole together in the meadow of Camelot to joust

and to tourney, that after your death men may speak of it that such good knights were wholly together such a day. As unto that counsel and at the King's request they accorded all, and took on their harness that longed unto jousting. But all this moving of the King was for this intent, for to see Galahad proved; for the King deemed he should not lightly come again unto the court after his departing. So were they assembled in the meadow both more and less. Then Sir Galahad, by the prayer of the King and the Queen, did upon him a noble jesseraunce, and also he did on his helm, but shield would he take none for no prayer of the King. And then Sir Gawaine and other knights prayed him to take a spear. Right so he did; and the Queen was in a tower with all her ladies, for to behold that tournament. Then Sir Galahad dressed him in middes of the meadow, and began to break spears marvellously, that all men had wonder of him; for he there surmounted all other knights, for within a while he had defouled many good knights of the Table Round save twain, that was Sir Launcelot and Sir Percivale.

The tourney beside Camelot

CHAPTER VII. How the Queen desired to see Galahad; and how after, all the knights were replenished with the Holy Sangreal, and how they avowed the enquest of the same. Then the King, at the Queen's request, made him to alight and to unlace his helm, that the Queen might see him in the visage.

The Holy Grail appears

When she beheld him she said: Soothly I dare well say that Sir Launcelot begat him, for never two men resembled more in likeness, therefore it nis no marvel though he be of great prowess. So a lady that stood by the Queen said: Madam, for God's sake ought he of right to be so good a knight? Yea, forsooth, said the Queen, for he is of all parties come of the best knights of the world and of the highest lineage; for Sir Launcelot is come but of the eighth degree from our Lord Jesu Christ, and Sir Galahad is of the ninth degree from our Lord Jesu Christ, therefore I dare say they be the greatest gentlemen of the world. And then the King and all estates went home unto Camelot, and so went to evensong to the great minster, and so after upon that to supper, and every knight sat in his own place as they were toforehand. Then anon they heard cracking and crying of thunder, that them thought the place should all to-drive. In the midst of this blast entered a sunbeam more clearer by seven times than ever they saw day, and all they were alighted of the grace of the Holy Ghost. Then began every knight to behold other, and either saw other, by their seeming, fairer than ever they saw afore. Not for then there was no knight might speak one word a great while, and so they looked every man on other as they had been dumb. Then there entered into the hall the Holy Grail covered with white samite, but there was none might see it, nor who bare it. And there was all the hall fulfilled with good odours,

and every knight had such meats and drinks as he best loved in this world. And when the Holy Grail had been borne through the hall, then the Holy Vessel departed suddenly, that they wist not where it became: then had they all breath to speak. And then the King yielded thankings to God, of His good grace that he had sent them. Certes, said the King, we ought to thank our Lord Jesu greatly for that he hath shewed us this day, at the reverence of this high feast of Pentecost. Now, said Sir Gawaine, we have been served this day of what meats and drinks we thought on; but one thing beguiled us, we might not see the Holy Grail, it was so preciously covered. Wherefore I will make here avow, that to-morn, without longer abiding, I shall labour in the quest of the Sangreal, that I shall hold me out a twelvemonth and a day, or more if need be, and never shall I return again unto the court till I have seen it more openly than it hath been seen here; and if I may not speed I shall return again as he that may not be against the will of our Lord Jesu Christ. When they of the Table Round heard Sir Gawaine say so, they arose up the most part and made such avows as Sir Gawaine had made. Anon as King Arthur heard this he was greatly displeased, for he wist well they might not again say their avows. Alas, said King Arthur unto Sir Gawaine, ye have nigh slain me with the avow and promise that ye have made; for through you ye have bereft me the fairest fellowship and the truest of

The quest of the Sangreal

Great sorrow at the knights' departing

knighthood that ever were seen together in any realm of the world; for when they depart from hence I am sure they all shall never meet more in this world, for they shall die many in the quest. And so it forthinketh me a little, for I have loved them as well as my life, wherefore it shall grieve me right sore, the departition of this fellowship: for I have had an old custom to have them in my fellowship.

CHAPTER VIII. How great sorrow was made of the King and the Queen and ladies for the departing of the knights, and how they departed. And therewith the tears filled in his eyes. And then he said: Gawaine, Gawaine, ye have set me in great sorrow, for I have great doubt that my true fellowship shall never meet here more again. Ah, said Sir Launcelot, comfort yourself; for it shall be unto us a great honour and much more than if we died in any other places, for of death we be siker. Ah, Launcelot, said the king, the great love that I have had unto you all the days of my life maketh me to say such doleful words; for never Christian king had never so many worthy men at his table as I have had this day at the Round Table, and that is my great sorrow. When the Queen, ladies, and gentlewomen, wist these tidings, they had such sorrow and heaviness that there might no tongue tell it, for those knights had held them in honour and charity. But among all other Queen Guenever made great sorrow.

I marvel, said she, my lord would suffer them to depart from him. Thus was all the court troubled for the love of the departition of those knights. And many of those ladies that loved knights would have gone with their lovers; and so had they done, had not an old knight come among them in religious clothing; and then he spake all on high and said: Fair lords, which have sworn in the quest of the Sangreal, thus sendeth you Nacien, the hermit, word, that none in this quest lead lady nor gentlewoman with him, for it is not to do in so high a service as they labour in; for I warn you plain, he that is not clean of his sins he shall not see the mysteries of our Lord Jesu Christ. And for this cause they left these ladies and gentlewomen. After this the Queen came unto Galahad and asked him of whence he was, and of what country. He told her of whence he was. And son unto Launcelot, she said he was. As to that, he said neither yea or nay. So God me help, said the Queen, of your father ye need not to shame you, for he is the goodliest knight, and of the best men of the world come, and of the strain, of all parties, of kings. Wherefore ye ought of right to be, of your deeds, a passing good man; and certainly, she said, ye resemble him much. Then Sir Galahad was a little ashamed and said: Madam, sith ye know in certain, wherefore do ye ask it me? for he that is my father shall be known openly and all betimes. And then they went to rest them. And in the honour of the highness of Galahad he was led into King Arthur's

Guenever and Galahad

The knights depart

chamber, and there rested in his own bed. And as soon as it was day the King arose, for he had no rest of all that night for sorrow. Then he went unto Gawaine and to Sir Launcelot that were arisen for to hear mass. And then the king again said: Ah Gawaine, Gawaine, ye have betrayed me; for never shall my court be amended by you, but ye will never be sorry for me as I am for you. And therewith the tears began to run down by his visage. And therewith the King said: Ah, knight Sir Launcelot, I require thee thou counsel me, for I would that this quest were undone an it might be. Sir, said Sir Launcelot, ye saw yesterday so many worthy knights that then were sworn that they may not leave it in no manner of wise. That wot I well, said the King, but it shall so heavy me at their departing that I wot well there shall no manner of joy remedy me. And then the King and the Queen went unto the minster. So anon Launcelot and Gawaine commanded their men to bring their arms. And when they all were armed save their shields and their helms, then they came to their fellowship, which were all ready in the same wise, for to go to the minster to hear their service. Then after the service was done the King would wit how many had undertaken the quest of the Holy Grail; and to account them he prayed them all. Then found they by tale an hundred and fifty, and all were knights of the Round Table. And then they put on their helms and departed, and recommended them all wholly unto the Queen;

Launcelot takes leave of Guenever

and there was weeping and great sorrow. Then the Queen departed into her chamber so that no man should apperceive her great sorrows. When Sir Launcelot missed the Queen he went into her chamber, and when she saw him she cried aloud: O Sir Launcelot, ye have betrayed me and put me to death, for to leave thus my lord. Ah, madam, said Sir Launcelot, I pray you be not displeased, for I shall come as soon as I may with my worship. Alas, said she, that ever I saw you; but he that suffered death upon the cross for all mankind be to you good conduct and safety, and all the whole fellowship. Right so departed Sir Launcelot, and found his fellowship that abode his coming. And so they mounted upon their horses and rode through the streets of Camelot; and there was weeping of the rich and poor, and the King turned away and might not speak for weeping. So within a while they came to a city, and a castle that hight Vagon. There they entered into the castle, and the lord of that castle was an old man that hight Vagon, and he was a good man of his living, and set open the gates, and made them all the good cheer that he might. And so on the morrow they were all accorded that they should depart every each from other; and then they departed on the morrow with weeping and mourning cheer, and every knight took the way that him best liked.

The red cross shield

CHAPTER IX. How Galahad gat him a shield, and how they sped that presumed to take down the said shield. Now rideth Sir Galahad yet without shield, and so he rode four days without any adventure. And at the fourth day after evensong he came to a White Abbey, and there he was received with great reverence, and led to a chamber, and there he was unarmed; and then was he ware of two knights of the Round Table, one was King Bagdemagus, and that other was Sir Uwaine. And when they saw him they went unto him and made of him great solace, and so they went to supper. Sirs, said Sir Galahad, what adventure brought you hither? Sir, said they, it is told us that within this place is a shield that no man may bear about his neck but if that he be mischieved or dead within three days, or else maimed for ever. Ah sir, said King Bagdemagus, I shall it bear to-morrow for to assay this strange adventure. In the name of God, said Sir Galahad. Sir, said Bagdemagus, an I may not achieve the adventure of this shield ye shall take it upon you, for I am sure ye shall not fail. Sir, said Galahad, I agree right well thereto, for I have no shield. So on the morn they arose and heard mass. Then King Bagdemagus asked where the adventurous shield was. Anon a monk led him behind an altar where the shield hung as white as any snow, but in the middes was a red cross. Sir, said the monk, this shield ought not to be hanged about no knight's neck but he be the worthiest knight of the world, and therefore I counsel

you knights to be well advised. Well, said King Bagdemagus, I wot well that I am not the best knight of the world, but yet shall I assay to bear it. And so he bare it out of the monastery; and then he said unto Sir Galahad: If it will please you I pray you abide here still, till ye know how I shall speed. I shall abide you here, said Galahad. Then King Bagdemagus took with him a squire, the which should bring tidings unto Sir Galahad how he sped. Then when they had ridden a two mile and came in a fair valley afore an hermitage, then they saw a goodly knight come from that part in white armour, horse and all; and he came as fast as his horse might run, with his spear in the rest, and King Bagdemagus dressed his spear against him and brake it upon the white knight. But the other struck him so hard that he brake the mails, and thrust him through the right shoulder, for the shield covered him not as at that time; and so he bare him from his horse. And therewith he alighted and took the white shield from him, saying: Knight, thou hast done thyself great folly, for this shield ought not to be borne but by him that shall have no peer that liveth. And then he came to King Bagdemagus' squire and said: Bear this shield unto the good knight Sir Galahad, that thou left in the abbey, and greet him well from me. Sir, said the squire, what is your name? Take thou no heed of my name, said the knight, for it is not for thee to know nor for none earthly man. Now, fair sir, said the squire, at the reverence of Jesu

The White Knight

Galahad has the shield

Christ, tell me for what cause this shield may not be borne but if the bearer thereof be mischieved. Now sith thou hast conjured me so, said the knight, this shield behoveth unto no man but unto Galahad. And the squire went unto Bagdemagus and asked whether he were sore wounded or not. Yea forsooth, said he, I shall escape hard from the death. Then he fetched his horse, and brought him with great pain unto an abbey. Then was he taken down softly and unarmed, and laid in a bed, and there was looked to his wounds. And as the book telleth, he lay there long, and escaped hard with the life.

CHAPTER X. How Galahad departed with the shield, and how King Evelake had received the shield of Joseph of Aramathie.

Sir Galahad, said the squire, that knight that wounded Bagdemagus sendeth you greeting, and bade that ye should bear this shield, wherethrough great adventures should befall. Now blessed be God and fortune, said Galahad. And then he asked his arms, and mounted upon his horse, and hung the white shield about his neck, and commended them unto God. And Sir Uwaine said he would bear him fellowship if it pleased him. Sir, said Galahad, that may ye not, for I must go alone, save this squire shall bear me fellowship: and so departed Uwaine. Then within a while came Galahad thereas the White knight abode him by the hermitage, and every each saluted other courteously. Sir, said Galahad, by this

Galahad and the White Knight

shield be many marvels fallen? Sir, said the knight, it befell after the passion of our Lord Jesu Christ thirty-two year, that Joseph of Aramathie, the gentle knight, the which took down our Lord off the holy Cross, at that time he departed from Jerusalem with a great party of his kindred with him. And so he laboured till that they came to a city that hight Sarras. And at that same hour that Joseph came to Sarras there was a King that hight Evelake, that had great war against the Saracens, and in especial against one Saracen, the which was King Evelake's cousin, a rich king and a mighty, which marched nigh this land, and his name was called Tolleme la Feintes. So on a day these two met to do battle. Then Joseph, the son of Joseph of Aramathie, went to King Evelake and told him he should be discomfit and slain, but if he left his belief of the old law and believed upon the new law. And then there he shewed him the right belief of the Holy Trinity, to the which he agreed unto with all his heart; and there this shield was made for King Evelake, in the name of Him that died upon the Cross. And then through his good belief he had the better of King Tolleme. For when Evelake was in the battle there was a cloth set afore the shield, and when he was in the greatest peril he let put away the cloth, and then his enemies saw a figure of a man on the Cross, wherethrough they all were discomfit. And so it befell that a man of King Evelake's was smitten his hand off, and bare

The story of the red cross shield

that hand in his other hand; and Joseph called that man unto him and bade him go with good devotion touch the Cross. And as soon as that man had touched the Cross with his hand it was as whole as ever it was tofore. Then soon after there fell a great marvel, that the cross of the shield at one time vanished away that no man wist where it became. And then King Evelake was baptised, and for the most part all the people of that city. So, soon after Joseph would depart, and King Evelake would go with him whether he would or nold. And so by fortune they came into this land, that at that time was called Great Britain; and there they found a great felon paynim, that put Joseph into prison. And so by fortune tidings came unto a worthy man that hight Mondrames, and he assembled all his people for the great renown he had heard of Joseph; and so he came into the land of Great Britain and disinherited this felon paynim and consumed him, and therewith delivered Joseph out of prison. And after that all the people were turned to the Christian faith.

CHAPTER XI. How Joseph made a cross on the white shield with his blood, and how Galahad was by a monk brought to a tomb. Not long after that Joseph was laid in his deadly bed. And when King Evelake saw that he made much sorrow, and said: For thy love I have left my country, and sith ye shall depart out of this world, leave me some token of yours that I may think on you.

Joseph said: That will I do full gladly; now bring me your shield that I took you when ye went into battle against King Tolleme. Then Joseph bled sore at the nose, so that he might not by no mean be staunched. And there upon that shield he made a cross of his own blood. Now may ye see a remembrance that I love you, for ye shall never see this shield but ye shall think on me, and it shall be always as fresh as it is now. And never shall man bear this shield about his neck but he shall repent it, unto the time that Galahad, the good knight, bear it; and the last of my lineage shall have it about his neck, that shall do many marvellous deeds. Now, said King Evelake, where shall I put this shield, that this worthy knight may have it? Ye shall leave it thereas Nacien, the hermit, shall be put after his death; for thither shall that good knight come the fifteenth day after that he shall receive the order of knighthood: and so that day that they set is this time that he have his shield, and in the same abbey lieth Nacien, the hermit. And then the White knight vanished away. Anon as the squire had heard these words, he alit off his hackney and kneeled down at Galahad's feet, and prayed him that he might go with him till he had made him knight. If I would not refuse you? Then will ye make me a knight? said the squire, and that order, by the grace of God, shall be well set in me. So Sir Galahad granted him, and turned again unto the abbey where they came from; and there men made great joy of

Galahad is brought to a tomb

The marvel of the tomb

Sir Galahad. And anon as he was alit there was a monk brought him unto a tomb in a churchyard, where there was such a noise that who that heard it should verily nigh be mad or lose his strength: and sir, they said, we deem it is a fiend.

CHAPTER XII. Of the marvel that Sir Galahad saw and heard in the tomb, and how he made Melias knight. Now lead me thither, said Galahad. And so they did, all armed save his helm. Now, said the good man, go to the tomb and lift it up. So he did, and heard a great noise; and piteously it said, that all men might hear it: Sir Galahad, the servant of Jesu Christ, come thou not nigh me, for thou shalt make me go again there where I have been so long. But Galahad was nothing afraid, but lifted up the stone; and there came out so foul a smoke, and after he saw the foulest figure leap thereout that ever he saw in the likeness of a man; and then he blessed him and wist well it was a fiend. Then heard he a voice say: Galahad, I see there environ about thee so many angels that my power may not dare thee. Right so Sir Galahad saw a body all armed lie in that tomb, and beside him a sword. Now, fair brother, said Galahad, let us remove this body, for it is not worthy to lie in this churchyard, for he was a false Christian man. And therewith they all departed and went to the abbey. And anon as he was unarmed a good man came and set him down by him and said: Sir,

I shall tell you what betokeneth all that ye saw in the tomb; for that covered body betokeneth the duresse of the world, and the great sin that our Lord found in the world. For there was such wretchedness that the father loved not the son, nor the son loved not the father; and that was one of the causes that our Lord took flesh and blood of a clean maiden, for our sins were so great at that time that wellnigh all was wickedness. Truly, said Galahad, I believe you right well. So Sir Galahad rested him there that night; and upon the morn he made the squire knight, and asked him his name, and of what kindred he was come. Sir, said he, men calleth me Melias de Lile, and I am the son of the king of Denmark. Now, fair sir, said Galahad, sith that ye be come of kings and queens, now look that knighthood be well set in you, for ye ought to be a mirror unto all chivalry. Sir, said Sir Melias, ye say sooth. But, sir, sithen ye have made me a knight ye must of right grant me my first desire that is reasonable. Ye say sooth, said Galahad. Melias said: Then that ye will suffer me to ride with you in this quest of the Sangreal, till that some adventure depart us. I grant you, sir. Then men brought Sir Melias his armour and his spear and his horse, and so Sir Galahad and he rode forth all that week or they found any adventure. And then upon a Monday in the morning, as they were departed from an abbey, they came to a cross which departed two ways, and in that cross were letters written that said

Sir Melias de Lile

The two ways

thus: Now, ye knights errant, the which goeth to seek knights adventurous, see here two ways; that one way defendeth thee that thou ne go that way, for he shall not go out of the way again but if he be a good man and a worthy knight; and if thou go on the left hand, thou shalt not lightly there win prowess, for thou shalt in this way be soon assayed. Sir, said Melias to Galahad, if it like you to suffer me to take the way on the left hand, tell me, for there I shall well prove my strength. It were better, said Galahad, ye rode not that way, for I deem I should better escape in that way than ye. Nay, my lord, I pray you let me have that adventure. Take it in God's name, said Galahad.

CHAPTER XIII. Of the adventure that Melias had, and how Galahad revenged him, and how Melias was carried into an abbey. And then rode Melias into an old forest, and therein he rode two days and more. And then he came into a fair meadow, and there was a fair lodge of boughs. And then he espied in that lodge a chair, wherein was a crown of gold, subtly wrought. Also there were cloths covered upon the earth, and many delicious meats set thereon. Sir Melias beheld this adventure, and thought it marvellous, but he had no hunger, but of the crown of gold he took much keep; and therewith he stooped down and took it up, and rode his way with it. And anon he saw a knight came riding after him that said: Knight, set down that

Melias meets with adventures

crown which is not yours, and therefore defend you. Then Sir Melias blessed him and said: Fair lord of heaven, help and save thy new-made knight. And then they let their horses run as fast as they might, so that the other knight smote Sir Melias through hauberk and through the left side, that he fell to the earth nigh dead. And then he took the crown and went his way; and Sir Melias lay still and had no power to stir. In the meanwhile by fortune there came Sir Galahad and found him there in peril of death. And then he said: Ah Melias, who hath wounded you? therefore it had been better to have ridden the other way. And when Sir Melias heard him speak: Sir, he said, for God's love let me not die in this forest, but bear me unto the abbey here beside, that I may be confessed and have my rights. It shall be done, said Galahad, but where is he that hath wounded you? With that Sir Galahad heard in the leaves cry on high: Knight, keep thee from me. Ah sir, said Melias, beware, for that is he that hath slain me. Sir Galahad answered: Sir knight, come on your peril. Then either dressed to other, and came together as fast as their horses might run, and Galahad smote him so that his spear went through his shoulder, and smote him down off his horse, and in the falling Galahad's spear brake. With that came out another knight out of the leaves, and brake a spear upon Galahad or ever he might turn him. Then Galahad drew out his sword and smote off the left arm of him, so that it fell to the

Galahad avenges Melias

earth. And then he fled, and Sir Galahad pursued fast after him. And then he turned again unto Sir Melias, and there he alit and dressed him softly on his horse tofore him, for the truncheon of his spear was in his body; and Sir Galahad stert up behind him, and held him in his arms, and so brought him to the abbey, and there unarmed him and brought him to his chamber. And then he asked his Saviour. And when he had received Him he said unto Sir Galahad: Sir, let death come when it pleaseth him. And therewith he drew out the truncheon of the spear out of his body: and then he swooned. Then came there an old monk which sometime had been a knight, and beheld Sir Melias. And anon he ransacked him; and then he said unto Sir Galahad: I shall heal him of his wound, by the grace of God, within the term of seven weeks. Then was Sir Galahad glad, and unarmed him, and said he would abide there three days. And then he asked Sir Melias how it stood with him. Then he said he was turned unto helping, God be thanked.

CHAPTER XIV. How Sir Galahad departed, and how he was commanded to go to the Castle of Maidens to destroy the wicked custom. Now will I depart, said Galahad, for I have much on hand, for many good knights be full busy about it, and this knight and I were in the same quest of the Sangreal. Sir, said the good man, for his sin he was thus wounded; and I marvel, said the

The betokening of the two ways

good man, how ye durst take upon you so rich a thing as the high order of knighthood without clean confession, and that was the cause ye were bitterly wounded. For the way on the right hand betokeneth the highway of our Lord Jesu Christ, and the way of a good true good liver. And the other way betokeneth the way of sinners and of misbelievers. And when the devil saw your pride and presumption, for to take you in the quest of the Sangreal, that made you to be overthrown, for it may not be achieved but by virtuous living. Also, the writing on the cross was a signification of heavenly deeds, and of knightly deeds in God's works, and no knightly deeds in worldly works. And pride is head of all deadly sins, that caused this knight to depart from Galahad. And where thou tookest the crown of gold thou sinnest in covetise and in theft: all this were no knightly deeds. And this Galahad, the holy knight, the which fought with the two knights, the two knights signify the two deadly sins which were wholly in this knight Melias; and they might not withstand you, for ye are without deadly sin. Now departed Galahad from thence, and betaught them all unto God. Sir Melias said: My lord Galahad, as soon as I may ride I shall seek you. God send you health, said Galahad, and so took his horse and departed, and rode many journeys forward and backward, as adventure would lead him. And at the last it happened him to depart from a place or a castle the which was named Abblasoure; and

Galahad goes to the Castle of Maidens

he had heard no mass, the which he was wont ever to hear or ever he departed out of any castle or place, and kept that for a custom. Then Sir Galahad came unto a mountain where he found an old chapel, and found there nobody, for all, all was desolate; and there he kneeled tofore the altar, and besought God of wholesome counsel. So as he prayed he heard a voice that said: Go thou now, thou adventurous knight, to the Castle of Maidens, and there do thou away the wicked customs.

CHAPTER XV. How Sir Galahad fought with the knights of the castle, and destroyed the wicked custom. When Sir Galahad heard this he thanked God, and took his horse; and he had not ridden but half a mile, he saw in a valley afore him a strong castle with deep ditches, and there ran beside it a fair river that hight Severn; and there he met with a man of great age, and either saluted other, and Galahad asked him the castle's name. Fair sir, said he, it is the Castle of Maidens. That is a cursed castle, said Galahad, and all they that be conversant therein, for all pity is out thereof, and all hardiness and mischief is therein. Therefore, I counsel you, sir knight, to turn again. Sir, said Galahad, wit you well I shall not turn again. Then looked Sir Galahad on his arms that nothing failed him, and then he put his shield afore him; and anon there met him seven fair maidens, the which said unto him: Sir knight, ve ride here in a great folly, for ye have the

water to pass over. Why should I not pass the water? said Galahad. So rode he away from them and met with a squire that said: Knight, those knights in the castle defy you, and defenden you ye go no further till that they wit what ye would. Fair sir, said Galahad, I come for to destroy the wicked custom of this castle. Sir, an ye will abide by that ye shall have enough to do. Go you now, said Galahad, and haste my needs. Then the squire entered into the castle. And anon after there came out of the castle seven knights, and all were brethren. And when they saw Galahad they cried: Knight, keep thee, for we assure thee nothing but death. Why, said Galahad, will ye all have ado with me at once? Yea, said they, thereto mayest thou trust. Then Galahad put forth his spear and smote the foremost to the earth, that near he brake his neck. And therewithal the other smote him on his shield great strokes, so that their spears brake. Then Sir Galahad drew out his sword, and set upon them so hard that it was marvel to see it, and so through great force he made them to forsake the field; and Galahad chased them till they entered into the castle, and so passed through the castle at another gate. And there met Sir Galahad an old man clothed in religious clothing, and said: Sir, have here the keys of this castle. Then Sir Galahad opened the gates, and saw so much people in the streets that he might not number them, and all said: Sir, ye be welcome, for long have we abiden here our deliverance Then came to

He fights with seven knights

The story of the seven knights

him a gentlewoman and said: These knights be fled, but they will come again this night, and here to begin again their evil custom. What will ye that I shall do? said Galahad. Sir, said the gentlewoman, that ye send after all the knights hither that hold their lands of this castle, and make them to swear for to use the customs that were used heretofore of old time. I will well, said Galahad. And there she brought him an horn of ivory, bounden with gold richly, and said: Sir, blow this horn which will be heard two mile about this castle. When Sir Galahad had blown the horn he set him down upon a bed. Then came a priest to Galahad, and said: Sir, it is past a seven year agone that these seven brethren came into this castle, and harboured with the lord of this castle, that hight the Duke Lianour, and he was lord of all this country. And when they espied the duke's daughter, that was a full fair woman, then by their false covin they made debate betwixt themself, and the duke of his goodness would have departed them, and there they slew him and his eldest son. And then they took the maiden and the treasure of the castle. And then by great force they held all the knights of this castle against their will under their obeissance, and in great service and truage, robbing and pillaging the poor common people of all that they had. So it happened on a day the duke's daughter said: Ye have done unto me great wrong to slay mine own father, and my brother, and thus to hold our lands: not for then, she said, ye shall not hold

this castle for many years, for by one knight ye shall be overcome. Thus she prophesied seven years agone. Well, said the seven knights, sithen ye say so, there shall never lady nor knight pass this castle but they shall abide maugre their heads, or die therefore, till that knight be come by whom we shall lose this castle. And therefore is it called the Maidens' Castle, for they have devoured many maidens. Now, said Galahad, is she here for whom this castle was lost? Nay sir, said the priest, she was dead within these three nights after that she was thus enforced; and sithen have they kept her younger sister, which endureth great pains with more other ladies. By this were the knights of the country come, and then he made them do homage and fealty to the king's daughter, and set them in great ease of heart. And in the morn there came one to Galahad and told him how that Gawaine, Gareth, and Uwaine, had slain the seven brethren. I suppose well, said Sir Galahad, and took his armour and his horse, and commended them unto God.

The castle delivered from the knights

CHAPTER XVI. How Sir Gawaine came to the abbey for to follow Galahad, and how he was shriven to a hermit. Now, saith the tale, after Sir Gawaine departed, he rode many journeys, both toward and froward. And at the last he came to the abbey where Sir Galahad had the white shield, and there Sir Gawaine learned the way to sewe after Sir Galahad; and so he rode to the abbey where

Melias tells of Galahad's adventures

Melias lay sick, and there Sir Melias told Sir Gawaine of the marvellous adventures that Sir Galahad did. Certes, said Sir Gawaine, I am not happy that I took not the way that he went, for an I may meet with him I will not depart from him lightly, for all marvellous adventures that Sir Galahad achieveth. Sir, said one of the monks, he will not of your fellowship. Why? said Sir Gawaine. Sir, said he, for ye be wicked and sinful, and he is full blessed. Right as they thus stood talking there came in riding Sir Gareth. And then they made joy either of other. And on the morn they heard mass, and so departed. And by the way they met with Sir Uwaine les Avoutres, and there Sir Uwaine told Sir Gawaine how he had met with none adventure sith he departed from the court. Nor we, said Sir Gawaine. And either promised other of the three knights not to depart while they were in that quest, but if fortune caused it. So they departed and rode by fortune till that they came by the Castle of Maidens; and there the seven brethren espied the three knights, and said: Sithen, we be flemed by one knight from this castle, we shall destroy all the knights of King Arthur's that we may overcome, for the love of Sir Galahad. And therewith the seven knights set upon the three knights, and by fortune Sir Gawaine slew one of the brethren, and each one of his fellows slew another, and so slew the remnant. And then they took the way under the castle, and there they lost the way that Sir Galahad rode, and there every

The betokening of the Castle of Maidens

each of them departed from other; and Sir Gawaine rode till he came to an hermitage, and there he found the good man saying his evensong of Our Lady; and there Sir Gawaine asked harbour for charity, and the good man granted it him gladly. Then the good man asked him what he was. Sir, he said, I am a knight of King Arthur's that am in the quest of the Sangreal, and my name is Sir Gawaine. Sir, said the good man, I would wit how it standeth betwixt God and you. Sir, said Sir Gawaine, I will with a good will shew you my life if it please you; and there he told the hermit how A monk of an abbey called me wicked knight. He might well say it, said the hermit, for when ye were first made knight ye should have taken you to knightly deeds and virtuous living, and ye have done the contrary, for ye have lived mischievously many winters; and Sir Galahad is a maid and sinned never, and that is the cause he shall achieve where he goeth that ye nor none such shall not attain, nor none in your fellowship, for ye have used the most untruest life that ever I heard knight live. For certes had ye not been so wicked as ye are, never had the seven brethren been slain by you and your two fellows. For Sir Galahad himself alone beat them all seven the day tofore, but his living is such he shall slay no man lightly. Also I may say you the Castle of Maidens betokeneth the good souls that were in prison afore the incarnation of Jesu Christ. And the seven knights betoken the seven deadly sins that reigned that time in the world; and I may

Galahad meets Launcelot and Percivale

liken the good Galahad unto the son of the High Father, that light within a maid, and bought all the souls out of thrall: so did Sir Galahad deliver all the maidens out of the woful castle. Now, Sir Gawaine, said the good man, thou must do penance for thy sin. Sir, what penance shall I do? Such as I will give, said the good man. Nay, said Sir Gawaine, I may do no penance; for we knights adventurous oft suffer great woe and pain. Well, said the good man, and then he held his peace. And on the morn Sir Gawaine departed from the hermit, and betaught him unto God. And by adventure he met with Sir Aglovale and Sir Griflet, two knights of the Table Round. And they two rode four days without finding of any adventure, and at the fifth day they departed. And every each held as befell them by adventure. Here leaveth the tale of Sir Gawaine and his fellows, and speak we of Sir Galahad.

CHAPTER XVII. How Sir Galahad met with Sir Launcelot and Sir Percivale, and smote them down, and departed from them.

So when Sir Galahad was departed from the Castle of Maidens he rode till he came to a waste forest, and there he met with Sir Launcelot and Sir Percivale, but they knew him not, for he was new disguised. Right so Sir Launcelot, his father, dressed his spear and brake it upon Sir Galahad, and Galahad smote him so again that he smote down horse and man. And then he drew his sword, and

dressed him unto Sir Percivale, and smote him so on the helm, that it rove to the coif of steel; and had not the sword swerved Sir Percivale had been slain, and with the stroke he fell out of his saddle. This jousts was done tofore the hermitage where a recluse dwelled. And when she saw Sir Galahad ride, she said: God be with thee, best knight of the world. Ah certes, said she, all aloud that Launcelot and Percivale might hear it: An yonder two knights had known thee as well as I do they would not have encountered with thee. When Sir Galahad heard her say so he was adread to be known: therewith he smote his horse with his spurs and rode a great pace froward them. Then perceived they both that he was Galahad; and up they gat on their horses, and rode fast after him, but in a while he was out of their sight. And then they turned again with heavy cheer. Let us spere some tidings, said Percivale, at yonder recluse. Do as ye list, said Sir Launcelot. When Sir Percivale came to the recluse she knew him well enough, and Sir Launcelot both. But Sir Launcelot rode overthwart and endlong in a wild forest, and held no path but as wild adventure led him. And at the last he came to a stony cross which departed two ways in waste land; and by the cross was a stone that was of marble, but it was so dark that Sir Launcelot might not wit what it was. Then Sir Launcelot looked by him, and saw an old chapel, and there he weened to have found people; and Sir Launcelot tied his horse till a tree, and there he did off his shield and hung

and jousts with them

The altar in the old chapel

it upon a tree. And then he went to the chapel door, and found it waste and broken. And within he found a fair altar, full richly arrayed with cloth of clean silk, and there stood a fair clean candlestick, which bare six great candles, and the candlestick was of silver. And when Sir Launcelot saw this light he had great will for to enter into the chapel, but he could find no place where he might enter; then was he passing heavy and dismayed. Then he returned and came to his horse and did off his saddle and bridle, and let him pasture, and unlaced his helm, and ungirt his sword, and laid him down to sleep upon his shield tofore the cross.

CHAPTER XVIII. How Sir Launcelot, half sleeping and half waking, saw a sick man borne in a litter, and how he was healed with the Sangreal. And so he fell a-sleep; and half waking and sleeping he saw come by him two palfreys all fair and white, the which bare a litter, therein lying a sick knight. And when he was nigh the cross he there abode still. All this Sir Launcelot saw and beheld, for he slept not verily; and he heard him say: O sweet Lord, when shall this sorrow leave me? and when shall the Holy Vessel come by me, wherethrough I shall be blessed? For I have endured thus long, for little trespass. A full great while complained the knight thus, and always Sir Launcelot heard it. With that Sir Launcelot saw the candlestick with the six tapers come before the cross, and he saw nobody that brought it. Also there came a table of silver, and the

Holy vessel of the Sangreal, which Launcelot had seen aforetime in King Pescheour's house. And therewith the sick knight set him up, and held up both his hands, and said: Fair sweet Lord, which is here within this holy vessel; take heed unto me that I may be whole of this malady. And therewith on his hands and on his knees he went so nigh that he touched the holy vessel and kissed it, and anon he was whole; and then he said: Lord God, I thank thee, for I am healed of this sickness. So when the Holy Vessel had been there a great while it went unto the chapel with the chandelier and the light, so that Launcelot wist not where it was become; for he was overtaken with sin that he had no power to rise ageyne the Holy Vessel; wherefore after that many men said of him shame, but he took repentance after that. Then the sick knight dressed him up and kissed the cross; anon his squire brought him his arms, and asked his lord how he did. Certes, said he, I thank God right well, through the Holy Vessel I am healed. But I have marvel of this sleeping knight that had no power to awake when this Holy Vessel was brought hither. I dare right well say, said the squire, that he dwelleth in some deadly sin whereof he was never confessed. By my faith, said the knight, whatsomever he be he is unhappy, for as I deem he is of the fellowship of the Round Table, the which is entered into the quest of the Sangreal. Sir, said the squire, here I have brought you all your arms save your helm and your sword, and therefore by mine assent now may ye take

The miracle of the candlestick

Launcelot hears a voice

this knight's helm and his sword: and so he did. And when he was clean armed he took Sir Launcelot's horse, for he was better than his; and so departed they from the Cross.

CHAPTER XIX. How a voice spake to Sir Launcelot, and how he found his horse and his helm borne away, and after went afoot.

Then anon Sir Launcelot waked, and set him up, and bethought him what he had seen there, and whether it were dreams or not. Right so heard he a voice that said: Sir Launcelot, more harder than is the stone, and more bitter than is the wood, and more naked and barer than is the leaf of the fig tree; therefore go thou from hence, and withdraw thee from this holy place. And when Sir Launcelot heard this he was passing heavy and wist not what to do, and so departed sore weeping, and cursed the time that he was born. For then he deemed never to have had worship more. For those words went to his heart, till that he knew wherefore he was called so. Then Sir Launcelot went to the cross and found his helm, his sword, and his horse taken away. And then he called himself a very wretch, and most unhappy of all knights; and there he said: My sin and my wickedness have brought me unto great dishonour. For when I sought worldly adventures for worldly desires, I ever achieved them and had the better in every place, and never was I discomfit in no quarrel, were it right or wrong. And now

I take upon me the adventures of holy things, and now I see and understand that mine old sin hindereth me and shameth me, so that I had no power to stir nor speak when the holy blood appeared afore me. So thus he sorrowed till it was day, and heard the fowls sing: then somewhat he was comforted. But when Sir Launcelot missed his horse and his harness then he wist well God was displeased with him. Then he departed from the cross on foot into a forest; and so by prime he came to an high hill, and found an hermitage and a hermit therein which was going unto mass. And then Launcelot kneeled down and cried on Our Lord mercy for his wicked works. So when mass was done Launcelot called him, and prayed him for charity for to hear his life. With a good will, said the good man. Sir, said he, be ye of King Arthur's court and of the fellowship of the Round Table? Yea forsooth, and my name is Sir Launcelot du Lake that hath been right well said of, and now my good fortune is changed, for I am the most wretch of the world. The hermit beheld him and had marvel how he was so abashed. Sir, said the hermit, ye ought to thank God more than any knight living, for He hath caused you to have more worldly worship than any knight that now liveth. And for your presumption to take upon you in deadly sin for to be in His presence, where His flesh and His blood was, that caused you ye might not see it with worldly eyes; for He will not

He remembers his sins

He confesses and is shriven

appear where such sinners be, but if it be unto their great hurt and unto their great shame; and there is no knight living now that ought to give God so great thank as ye, for He hath given you beauty, seemliness, and great strength above all other knights; and therefore ye are the more beholding unto God than any other man, to love Him and dread Him, for your strength and manhood will little avail you an God be against you.

CHAPTER XX. How Sir Launcelot was shriven, and what sorrow he made, and of the good ensamples which were shewed him. Then Sir Launcelot wept with heavy cheer, and said: Now I know well ye say me sooth. Sir, said the good man, hide none old sin from me. Truly, said Sir Launcelot, that were me full loath to discover. For this fourteen year I never discovered one thing that I have used, and that may I now wite my shame and my misadventure. And then he told there that good man all his life. And how he had loved a queen unmeasurably and out of measure long. And all my great deeds of arms that I have done, I did for the most part for the Queen's sake, and for her sake would I do battle were it right or wrong; and never did I battle all only for God's sake, but for to win worship and to cause me to be the better beloved, and little or nought I thanked God of it. Then Sir Launcelot said: I pray you counsel me. I will counsel

The hermit's counsel

you, said the hermit, if ye will ensure me that ye will never come in that queen's fellowship as much as ye may forbear. And then Sir Launcelot promised him he nold, by the faith of his body. Look that your heart and your mouth accord, said the good man, and I shall ensure you ye shall have more worship than ever ye had. Holy father, said Sir Launcelot, I marvel of the voice that said to me marvellous words, as ye have heard toforehand. Have ye no marvel, said the good man, thereof, for it seemeth well God loveth you; for men may understand a stone is hard of kind, and namely one more than another; and that is to understand by thee, Sir Launcelot, for thou wilt not leave thy sin for no goodness that God hath sent thee; therefore thou art more than any stone, and never wouldst thou be made neysshe nor by water nor by fire, and that is the hete of the Holy Ghost may not enter in thee. Now take heed, in all the world men shall not find one knight to whom Our Lord hath given so much of grace as He hath given you, for He hath given you fairness with seemliness, He hath given thee wit, discretion to know good from evil, He hath given thee prowess and hardiness, and given thee to work so largely that thou hast had at all days the better wheresomever thou came; and now Our Lord will suffer thee no longer, but that thou shalt know Him whether thou wilt or nylt. And why the voice called thee bitterer than wood, for

Launcelot's repentance

where overmuch sin dwelleth, there may be but little sweetness, wherefore thou art likened to an old rotten tree. Now have I shewed thee why thou art harder than the stone and bitterer than the tree. Now shall I shew thee why thou art more naked and barer than the fig tree. It befel that Our Lord on Palm Sunday preached in Jerusalem, and there He found in the people that all hardness was harboured in them, and there He found in all the town not one that would harbour him. And then He went without the town, and found in the middes of the way a fig tree, the which was right fair and well garnished of leaves, but fruit had it none. Then Our Lord cursed the tree that bare no fruit; that betokeneth the fig tree unto Jerusalem, that had leaves and no fruit. So thou, Sir Launcelot, when the Holy Grail was brought afore thee, He found in thee no fruit, nor good thought nor good will, and defouled with lechery. Certes, said Sir Launcelot, all that you have said is true, and from henceforward I cast me, by the grace of God, never to be so wicked as I have been, but as to follow knighthood and to do feats of arms. Then the good man enjoined Sir Launcelot such penance as he might do and to pursue knighthood, and so assoiled him, and prayed Sir Launcelot to abide with him all that day. I will well, said Sir Launcelot, for I have neither helm, nor horse, nor sword. As for that, said the good man, I shall help you or tomorn

at even of an horse, and all that longed unto you. And then Sir Launcelot repented him greatly.

Here leaveth off the history of Sir Launcelot. And here followeth of Sir Percivale de Galis which is the fourteenth book.

BOOK XIV

Percivale and the recluse

CHAPTER I. How Sir Percivale came to a recluse and asked counsel, and how she told him that she was his aunt. Now saith the tale, that when Sir Launcelot was ridden after Sir Galahad, the which had all these adventures above said, Sir Percivale turned again unto the recluse, where he deemed to have tidings of that knight that Launcelot followed. And so he kneeled at her window, and the recluse opened it and asked Sir Percivale what he would. Madam, he said, I am a knight of King Arthur's court, and my name is Sir Percivale de Galis. When the recluse heard his name she had great joy of him, for mickle she had loved him tofore any other knight, for she ought to do so, for she was his aunt. And then she commanded the gates to be opened, and there he had all the cheer that she might make him, and all that was in her power was at his commandment. So on the morn Sir Percivale went to the recluse and asked her if she knew that knight with the white shield. Sir, said she, why would ye wit? Truly, madam, said Sir Percivale, I shall never be well at ease till that I know of that knight's fellowship, and that I may fight with him, for I may not leave him so

lightly, for I have the shame yet. Ah, Percivale, said she, would ye fight with him? I see well ye have great will to be slain as your father was, through outrageousness. Madam, said Sir Percivale, it seemeth by your words that ye know me. Yea, said she, I well ought to know you, for I am your aunt, although I be in a priory place. For some called me sometime the Queen of the Waste Lands, and I was called the Queen of most riches in the world; and it pleased me never my riches so much as doth my poverty. Then Sir Percivale wept for very pity when that he knew it was his aunt. Ah, fair nephew, said she, when heard ye tidings of your mother? Truly, said he, I heard none of her, but I dream of her much in my sleep; and therefore I wot not whether she be dead or a-live. Certes, fair nephew, said she, your mother is dead, for after your departing from her she took such a sorrow that anon, after she was confessed, she died. Now, God have mercy on her soul, said Sir Percivale, it sore forthinketh me; but all we must change the life. Now, fair aunt, tell me what is the knight? I deem it be he that bare the red arms on Whitsunday. Wit you well, said she, that this is he, for otherwise ought he not to do, but to go in red arms; and that same knight hath no peer, for he worketh all by miracle, and he shall never be overcome of none earthly man's hand.

The Queen of the Waste Lands

The betokening of the Round Table

CHAPTER II. How Merlin likened the Round Table to the world, and how the knights that should achieve the Sangreal should be known. Also Merlin made the Round Table in tokening of roundness of the world, for by the Round Table is the world signified by right, for all the world, Christian and heathen, repair unto the Round Table; and when they are chosen to be of the fellowship of the Round Table they think them more blessed and more in worship than if they had gotten half the world; and ye have seen that they have lost their fathers and their mothers, and all their kin, and their wives and their children, for to be of your fellowship. It is well seen by you; for since ye have departed from your mother ye would never see her, ye found such fellowship at the Round Table. When Merlin had ordained the Round Table he said, by them which should be fellows of the Round Table the truth of the Sangreal should be well known. And men asked him how men might know them that should best do and to achieve the Sangreal? Then he said there should be three white bulls that should achieve it, and the two should be maidens, and the third should be chaste. And that one of the three should pass his father as much as the lion passeth the leopard, both of strength and hardiness. They that heard Merlin say so said thus unto Merlin: Sithen there shall be such a knight, thou shouldest ordain by thy crafts a siege, that no man should sit in it but he all only that shall pass all other knights. Then Merlin answered

that he would do so. And then he made the Siege Perilous, in the which Galahad sat in at his meat on Whitsunday last past. Now, madam, said Sir Percivale, so much have I heard of you that by my good will I will never have ado with Sir Galahad but by way of kindness; and for God's love, fair aunt, can ye teach me some way where I may find him? for much would I love the fellowship of him. Fair nephew, said she, ye must ride unto a castle the which is called Goothe, where he hath a cousin-germain, and there may ye be lodged this night. And as he teacheth you, pursue after as fast as ye can; and if he can tell you no tidings of him, ride straight unto the Castle of Carbonek, where the maimed king is there lying, for there shall ye hear true tidings of him.

The Siege Perilous

CHAPTER III. How Sir Percivale came into a monastery, where he found King Evelake, which was an old man. Then departed Sir Percivale from his aunt, either making great sorrow. And so he rode till evensong time. And then he heard a clock smite; and then he was ware of an house closed well with walls and deep ditches, and there he knocked at the gate and was let in, and he alit and was led unto a chamber, and soon he was unarmed. And there he had right good cheer all that night; and on the morn he heard his mass, and in the monastery he found a priest ready at the altar. And on the right side he saw a pew closed with iron,

The maimed king

and behind the altar he saw a rich bed and a fair, as of cloth of silk and gold. Then Sir Percivale espied that therein was a man or a woman, for the visage was covered; then he left off his looking and heard his service. And when it came to the sacring, he that lay within that percloos dressed him up, and uncovered his head; and then him beseemed a passing old man, and he had a crown of gold upon his head, and his shoulders were naked and unhilled unto his navel. And then Sir Percivale espied his body was full of great wounds, both on the shoulders, arms, and visage. And ever he held up his hands against our Lord's body, and cried: Fair, sweet Father, Jesu Christ, forget not me. And so he lay down, but always he was in his prayers and orisons; and him seemed to be of the age of three hundred winter. And when the mass was done the priest took Our Lord's body and bare it to the sick king. And when he had used it he did off his crown, and commanded the crown to be set on the altar. Then Sir Percivale asked one of the brethren what he was. Sir, said the good man, ye have heard much of Joseph of Aramathie, how he was sent by Jesu Christ into this land for to teach and preach the holy Christian faith; and therefore he suffered many persecutions the which the enemies of Christ did unto him, and in the city of Sarras he converted a king whose name was Evelake. And so this king came with Joseph into this land, and ever he was busy to be thereas the Sangreal was; and

on a time he nighed it so nigh that Our Lord was displeased with him, but ever he followed it more and more, till God struck him almost blind. Then this king cried mercy, and said: Fair Lord, let me never die till the good knight of my blood of the ninth degree be come, that I may see him openly that he shall achieve the Sangreal, that I may kiss him.

Evelake's prayer granted

CHAPTER IV. How Sir Percivale saw many men of arms bearing a dead knight, and how he fought against them. When the king thus had made his prayers he heard a voice that said: Heard be thy prayers, for thou shalt not die till he have kissed thee. And when that knight shall come the clearness of your eyes shall come again, and thou shalt see openly, and thy wounds shall be healed, and erst shall they never close. And this befell of King Evelake, and this same king hath lived this three hundred winters this holy life, and men say the knight is in the court that shall heal him. Sir, said the good man, I pray you tell me what knight that ye be, and if ye be of King Arthur's court and of the Table Round. Yea forsooth, said he, and my name is Sir Percivale de Galis. And when the good man understood his name he made great joy of him. And then Sir Percivale departed and rode till the hour of noon. And he met in a valley about a twenty men of arms, which bare in a bier a knight deadly slain. And when they saw Sir Percivale they asked him of whence he was. And he an-

Percivale fights with twenty knights

swered: Of the court of King Arthur. Then they cried all at once: Slay him. Then Sir Percivale smote the first to the earth and his horse upon him. And then seven of the knights smote upon his shield all at once, and the remnant slew his horse so that he fell to the earth. So had they slain him or taken him had not the good knight, Sir Galahad, with the red arms come there by adventure into those parts. And when he saw all those knights upon one knight he cried: Save me that knight's life. And then he dressed him toward the twenty men of arms as fast as his horse might drive, with his spear in the rest, and smote the foremost horse and man to the earth. And when his spear was broken he set his hand to his sword, and smote on the right hand and on the left hand that it was marvel to see, and at every stroke he smote one down or put him to a rebuke, so that they would fight no more but fled to a thick forest, and Sir Galahad followed them. And when Sir Percivale saw him chase them so, he made great sorrow that his horse was away. And then he wist well it was Sir Galahad. And then he cried aloud: Ah fair knight, abide and suffer me to do thankings unto thee, for much have ye done for me. But ever Sir Galahad rode so fast that at the last he passed out of his sight. And as fast as Sir Percivale might he went after him on foot, crying. And then he met with a yeoman riding upon an hackney, the which led in his hand a great steed blacker than any bear. Ah, fair friend,

said Sir Percivale, as ever I may do for you, and to be your true knight in the first place ye will require me, that ye will lend me that black steed, that I might overtake a knight the which rideth afore me. Sir knight, said the yeoman, I pray you hold me excused of that, for that I may not do. For wit ye well, the horse is such a man's horse, that an I lent it you or any man, that he would slay me. Alas, said Sir Percivale, I had never so great sorrow as I have had for losing of yonder knight. Sir, said the yeoman, I am right heavy for you, for a good horse would beseem you well; but I dare not deliver you this horse but if ye would take him from me. That will I not do, said Sir Percivale. And so they departed; and Sir Percivale set him down under a tree, and made sorrow out of measure. And as he was there, there came a knight riding on the horse that the yeoman led, and he was clean armed.

Galahad smites them down

CHAPTER V. How a yeoman desired him to get again an horse, and how Sir Percivale's hackney was slain, and how he gat an horse. And anon the yeoman came pricking after as fast as ever he might, and asked Sir Percivale if he saw any knight riding on his black steed. Yea, sir, forsooth, said he; why, sir, ask ye me that? Ah, sir, that steed he hath benome me with strength; wherefore my lord will slay me in what place he findeth me. Well, said Sir Percivale, what wouldst thou that I did? Thou seest well that I am

Percivale has a fall

on foot, but an I had a good horse I should bring him soon again. Sir, said the yeoman, take mine hackney and do the best ye can, and I shall serve you on foot to wit how that ye shall speed. Then Sir Percivale alit upon that hackney, and rode as fast as he might, and at the last he saw that knight. And then he cried: Knight, turn again; and he turned and set his spear against Sir Percivale, and he smote the hackney in the middes of the breast that he fell down dead to the earth, and there he had a great fall, and the other rode his way. And then Sir Percivale was wood wroth, and cried: Abide, wicked knight; coward and false-hearted knight, turn again and fight with me on foot. But he answered not, but passed on his way. When Sir Percivale saw he would not turn he cast away his helm and sword, and said: Now am I a very wretch, cursed and most unhappy above all other knights. So in this sorrow he abode all that day till it was night; and then he was faint, and laid him down and slept till it was midnight; and then he awaked and saw afore him a woman which said unto him right fiercely: Sir Percivale, what dost thou here? He answered, I do neither good nor great ill. If thou wilt ensure me, said she, that thou wilt fulfil my will when I summon thee, I shall lend thee mine own horse which shall bear thee whither thou wilt. Sir Percivale was glad of her proffer, and ensured her to fulfil all her desire. Then abide me here, and I shall go and fetch you an horse And

so she came soon again and brought an horse with her that was inly black. When Percivale beheld that horse he marvelled that it was so great and so well apparelled; and not for then he was so hardy, and he leapt upon him, and took none heed of himself. And so anon as he was upon him he thrust to him with his spurs, and so he rode by a forest, and the moon shone clear. And within an hour and less he bare him four days' journey thence, until he came to a rough water the which roared, and his horse would have borne him into it.

Percivale in danger

CHAPTER VI. Of the great danger that Sir Percivale was in by his horse, and how he saw a serpent and a lion fight. And when Sir Percivale came nigh the brim, and saw the water so boistous, he doubted to overpass it. And then he made a sign of the cross on his forehead. When the fiend felt him so charged he shook off Sir Percivale, and he went into the water crying and roaring, making great sorrow, and it seemed unto him that the water brent. Then Sir Percivale perceived it was a fiend, the which would have brought him unto his perdition. Then he commended himself unto God, and prayed Our Lord to keep him from all such temptations; and so he prayed all that night till on the morn that it was day; then he saw that he was in a wild mountain the which was closed with the sea nigh all about, that he might see no land about him which might relieve him, but wild beasts.

The fight of the lion and the serpent

And then he went into a valley, and there he saw a young serpent bring a young lion by the neck, and so he came by Sir Percivale. With that came a great lion crying and roaring after the serpent. And as fast as Sir Percivale saw this he marvelled, and hied him thither, but anon the lion had overtaken the serpent and began battle with him. And then Sir Percivale thought to help the lion for he was the more natural beast of the two; and therewith he drew his sword, and set his shield afore him, and there he gave the serpent such a buffet that he had a deadly wound. When the lion saw that, he made no resemblaunt to fight with him, but made him all the cheer that a beast might make a man. Then Percivale perceived that, and cast down his shield which was broken; and then he did off his helm for to gather wind, for he was greatly enchafed with the serpent: and the lion went alway about him fawning as a spaniel. And then he stroked him on the neck and on the shoulders. And then he thanked God of the fellowship of that beast. And about noon the lion took his little whelp and trussed him and bare him there he came from. Then was Sir Percivale alone. And as the tale telleth, he was one of the men of the world at that time which most believed in our Lord Jesu Christ, for in those days there were but few folks that believed in God perfectly. For in those days the son spared not the father no more than a stranger. And so Sir Percivale comforted himself in our Lord Jesu, and besought God no temptation should bring him out

of God's service, but to endure as his true champion. Thus when Sir Percivale had prayed he saw the lion come toward him, and then he couched down at his feet. And so all that night the lion and he slept together; and when Sir Percivale slept he dreamed a marvellous dream, that there two ladies met with him, and that one sat upon a lion, and that other sat upon a serpent, and that one of them was young, and the other was old; and the youngest him thought said: Sir Percivale, my lord saluteth thee, and sendeth thee word that thou array thee and make thee ready, for to-morn thou must fight with the strongest champion of the world. And if thou be overcome thou shall not be quit for losing of any of thy members, but thou shalt be shamed for ever to the world's end. And then he asked her what was her lord. And she said the greatest lord of all the world: and so she departed suddenly that he wist not where.

Percivale's marvellous dream

CHAPTER VII. Of the vision that Sir Percivale saw, and how his vision was expounded, and of his lion. Then came forth the other lady that rode upon the serpent, and she said: Sir Percivale, I complain me of you that ye have done unto me, and have not offended unto you. Certes, madam, he said, unto you nor no lady I never offended. Yes, said she, I shall tell you why. I have nourished in this place a great while a serpent, which served me a great while, and yesterday ye slew him as he gat his prey. Say me for what cause ye slew

His temptation

him, for the lion was not yours. Madam, said Sir Percivale, I know well the lion was not mine, but I did it for the lion is of more gentler nature than the serpent, and therefore I slew him; meseemeth I did not amiss against you. Madam, said he, what would ye that I did? I would, said she, for the amends of my beast that ye become my man. And then he answered: That will I not grant you. No, said she, truly ye were never but my servant sin ye received the homage of Our Lord Jesu Christ. Therefore, I ensure you in what place I may find you without keeping I shall take you as he that sometime was my man. And so she departed from Sir Percivale and left him sleeping, the which was sore travailed of his advision. And on the morn he arose and blessed him, and he was passing feeble. Then was Sir Percivale ware in the sea, and saw a ship come sailing toward him; and Sir Percivale went unto the ship and found it covered within and without with white samite. And at the board stood an old man clothed in a surplice, in likeness of a priest. Sir, said Sir Percivale, ye be welcome. God keep you, said the good man. Sir, said the old man, of whence be ye? Sir, said Sir Percivale, I am of King Arthur's court, and a knight of the Table Round, the which am in the quest of the Sangreal; and here am I in great duresse, and never like to escape out of this wilderness. Doubt not, said the good man, an ye be so true a knight as the order of chivalry requireth, and of heart as ye ought to be, ye should not doubt that none

enemy should slay you. What are ye? said Sir Percivale. Sir, said the old man, I am of a strange country, and hither I come to comfort you. Sir, said Sir Percivale, what signifieth my dream that I dreamed this night? And there he told him altogether: She which rode upon the lion betokeneth the new law of holy church, that is to understand, faith, good hope, belief, and baptism. For she seemed younger than the other it is great reason, for she was born in the resurrection and the passion of our Lord Jesu Christ. And for great love she came to thee to warn thee of thy great battle that shall befall thee. With whom, said Sir Percivale, shall I fight? With the most champion of the world, said the old man; for as the lady said, but if thou quit thee well thou shalt not be quit by losing of one member, but thou shalt be shamed to the world's end. And she that rode on the serpent signifieth the old law, and that serpent betokeneth a fiend. And why she blamed thee that thou slewest her servant, it betokeneth nothing; the serpent that thou slewest betokeneth the devil that thou rodest upon to the rock. And when thou madest a sign of the cross, there thou slewest him, and put away his power. And when she asked thee amends and to become her man, and thou saidst thou wouldst not, that was to make thee to believe on her and leave thy baptism. So he commanded Sir Percivale to depart, and so he leapt over the board and the ship, and all went away he wist not whither. Then he went up unto the rock and found the lion which always

The betokening of the dream

The lady in the ship

kept him fellowship, and he stroked him upon the back and had great joy of him.

CHAPTER VIII. How Sir Percival saw a ship coming to him ward, and how the lady of the ship told him of her disheritance. By that Sir Percivale had abiden there till mid-day he saw a ship came rowing in the sea as all the wind of the world had driven it. And so it drove under that rock. And when Sir Percivale saw this he hied him thither, and found the ship covered with silk more blacker than any bear, and therein was a gentlewoman of great beauty, and she was clothed richly that none might be better. And when she saw Sir Percivale she said: Who brought you in this wilderness where ye be never like to pass hence, for ye shall die here for hunger and mischief? Damosel, said Sir Percivale, I serve the best man of the world, and in his service he will not suffer me to die, for who that knocketh shall enter, and who that asketh shall have, and who that seeketh him he hideth him not. But then she said: Sir Percivale, wot ye what I am? Yea, said he. Now who taught you my name? said she. Now, said Sir Percivale, I know you better than ye ween. And I came out of the waste forest where I found the Red Knight with the white shield, said the damosel. Ah, damosel, said he, with that knight would I meet passing fain. Sir knight, said she, an ye will ensure me by the faith that ye owe unto knighthood that ye shall do my will what time I summon you, and I shall bring you unto that

knight. Yea, said he, I shall promise you to fulfil your desire. Well, said she, now shall I tell you. I saw him in the forest chasing two knights unto a water, the which is called Mortaise; and they drove him into that water for dread of death, and the two knights passed over, and the red knight passed after, and there his horse was drenched, and he, through great strength, escaped unto the land: thus she told him, and Sir Percivale was passing glad thereof. Then she asked him if he had ate any meat late. Nay, madam, truly I ate no meat nigh this three days, but late here I spake with a good man that fed me with his good words and holy, and refreshed me greatly. Ah, sir knight, said she, that same man is an enchanter and a multiplier of words. For an ye believe him ye shall plainly be shamed, and die in this rock for pure hunger, and be eaten with wild beasts; and ye be a young man and a goodly knight, and I shall help you an ye will. What are ye, said Sir Percivale, that proffered me thus great kindness? I am, said she, a gentlewoman that am disherited, which was sometime the richest woman of the world. Damosel, said Sir Percival, who hath disherited you? for I have great pity of you. Sir, said she, I dwelled with the greatest man of the world, and he made me so fair and clear that there was none like me; and of that great beauty I had a little pride more than I ought to have had. Also I said a word that pleased him not. And then he would not suffer me to be any longer in his company, and so drove me from mine heritage,

She offers Percivale help

Percivale makes a promise

and so disherited me, and he had never pity of me nor of none of my council, nor of my court. And sithen, sir knight, it hath befallen me so, and through me and mine I have benome him many of his men, and made them to become my men For they ask never nothing of me but I give it them, that and much more. Thus I and all my servants were against him night and day. Therefore I know now no good knight, nor no good man, but I get them on my side an I may. And for that I know that thou art a good knight, I beseech you to help me; and for ye be a fellow of the Round Table, wherefore ye ought not to fail no gentlewoman which is disherited, an she besought you of help.

CHAPTER IX. How Sir Percivale promised her help, and how he required her of love, and how he was saved from the fiend. Then Sir Percivale promised her all the help that he might; and then she thanked him. And at that time the weather was hot. Then she called unto her a gentlewoman and bade her bring forth a pavilion; and so she did, and pight it upon the gravel. Sir, said she, now may ye rest you in this heat of the day. Then he thanked her, and she put off his helm and his shield, and there he slept a great while. And then he awoke and asked her if she had any meat, and she said. Yea, also ye shall have enough. And so there was set enough upon the table, and thereon so much that he had m rvel, for there was all manner of meats that

he could think on. Also he drank there the strongest wine that ever he drank, him thought, and therewith he was a little chafed more than he ought to be; with that he beheld the gentlewoman, and him thought she was the fairest creature that ever he saw. And then Sir Percivale proffered her love, and prayed her that she would be his. Then she refused him, in a manner, when he required her, for the cause he should be the more ardent on her, and ever he ceased not to pray her of love. And when she saw him well enchafed, then she said: Sir Percivale, wit you well I shall not fulfil your will but if ye swear from henceforth ye shall be my true servant, and to do nothing but that I shall command you. Will ye ensure me this as ye be a true knight? Yea, said he, fair lady, by the faith of my body. Well, said she, now shall ye do with me whatso it please you; and now wit ye well ye are the knight in the world that I have most desire to. And then two squires were commanded to make a bed in middes of the pavilion. And anon she was unclothed and laid therein. And then Sir Percivale laid him down by her naked; and by adventure and grace he saw his sword lie on the ground naked, in whose pommel was a red cross and the sign of the crucifix therein, and bethought him on his knighthood and his promise made toforehand unto the good man; then he made a sign of the cross in his forehead, and therewith the pavilion turned up-so-down, and then it changed unto a smoke, and a black cloud, and then he was adread and cried aloud:

He resists temptation

He does penance

CHAPTER X. How Sir Percivale for penance rove himself through the thigh; and how she was known for the devil. Fair sweet Father, Jesu Christ, ne let me not be shamed, the which was nigh lost had not thy good grace been. And then he looked into a ship, and saw her enter therein, which said: Sir Percivale, ye have betrayed me. And so she went with the wind roaring and yelling, that it seemed all the water brent after her. Then Sir Percivale made great sorrow, and drew his sword unto him, saying: Sithen my flesh will be my master I shall punish it; and therewith he rove himself through the thigh that the blood stert about him, and said: O good Lord, take this in recompensation of that I have done against thee, my Lord. So then he clothed him and armed him, and called himself a wretch, saying: How nigh was I lost, and to have lost that I should never have gotten again, that was my virginity, for that may never be recovered after it is once lost. And then he stopped his bleeding wound with a piece of his shirt. Thus as he made his moan he saw the same ship come from Orient that the good man was in the day afore, and the noble knight was ashamed with himself, and therewith he fell in a swoon. And when he awoke he went unto him weakly, and there he saluted this good man. And then he asked Sir Percivale: How hast thou done sith I departed? Sir, said he, here was a gentlewoman and led me into deadly sin. And there he told him altogether. Knew ye not the maid? said the good man. Sir,

said he, nay, but well I wot the fiend sent her hither to shame me. O good knight, said he, thou art a fool, for that gentlewoman was the master fiend of hell, the which hath power above all devils, and that was the old lady that thou sawest in thine advision riding on the serpent. Then he told Sir Percivale how our Lord Jesu Christ beat him out of heaven for his sin, the which was the most brightest angel of heaven, and therefore he lost his heritage: And that was the champion that thou foughtest withal, the which had overcome thee had not the grace of God been. Now beware Sir Percivale, and take this for an ensample. And then the good man vanished away. Then Sir Percivale took his arms, and entered into the ship, and so departed from thence.

He departs

Here endeth the fourteenth book, which is of Sir Percivale. And here followeth of Sir Launcelot, which is the fifteenth book.

GLOSSARY

abashed, cast down.
accord; 'make at a.,' reconcile.
accorded, reconciled, agreed.
account, count.
accounted, counted.
adoubted, afeared.
adventure, venture.
advice; 'at mine a.,' in my opinion.
advision, vision.
afeard, afraid.
after, according to.
again, against, towards.
againward, against, towards.
alighted, illumined.
amazed, dazed.
anon, immediately.
apparelled, furnished, appointed.
appelled, impeached, accused.
apperceive, perceive.
a-purpose, on purpose.
araged, enraged.
as, as if.
assay, try, test.
assoiled, absolved.
assotted, infatuated.
astonied, stunned.
avised, advised, prepared.
avoid, leave, quit.
avow, vow.

bands, bonds.
beclosed, enclosed.
become; 'is b.,' has got to.
beholding, beholden.
benome, taken from.
beseemeth; 'me b.,' it seems to me.
beseen, appointed.
betaught, commended.
betook, commended, gave.
bobaunce, pride, pomp.
boistous, boisterous, cross-grained, rough.
borrowe, pledge, security.
bote, remedy.
bounté, bounty.
bourder, jester.
braced, embraced.
brast, burst.
brasting, bursting.
brawn, the thick muscular part of the flesh.
breathed, rested, stopped to take breath.
breathed during, able to sustain breath.
brent, burnt.
brised, crushed, broke.
bubbly, bubbling.
bushment, ambush.
but, except.
but if, except.
by, near.

cantels, small pieces.
cast, determined.
casteth, is determined.
cast me, am resolved.
charge, command.
cheer, demeanour.
clean, completely, entirely.

clearness, brightness.
clerk, scholar, cleric.
closed, enclosed.
coif, head-covering, helmet.
concluded, determined.
condition, habit.
confessed, shrived.
contrary, contradict.
convenable, convenient.
couched, lay.
could, knew.
cousin-germain, first cousin.
covetise, covetousness.
covin, deceit, trickery.
croup, crupper.
cry; 'let do c.,' caused to be proclaimed.

damage, loss, pity.
dare, frighten.
dawed, sprinkled with water.
deal, act.
deceivable, deceitful.
defaded, faded away.
default, want, need, fault.
defendeth, forbids.
defouled, shattered.
depart, divide.
departed, parted.
departition, departure.
despite, spite.
devices, badges.
dints, blows.
discomfit, discomfited.
discover, disclose.
disheritance, disinheritance.
dissevered, severed.
disworship, dishonour.
dole, sorrow, grief.
done, caused.
doted, doting.
doublet, upper garment of a man.
doubt, fear.
doubted, feared.
dread, dreaded.
drenched, drowned.
dressed, placed, pitched.
——, poised, prepared.
duresse, hardship, durance.
dureth, lasts, remains.
during, enduring.

embushment, ambush, ambuscade.
enchafed, heated.
endlong, the whole length of, along.
endure, last, hold out.
endured, lasted.
——, remained.
enquest, quest.
ensamples, examples.
ensure, assure.
entreated, treated.
environ, surround.
erst, before.
estate, state, pomp.
estates, ranks, estates.
evenlong, straight along.
expense, disbursement, expenditure.
eyen, eyes.

fain, glad.
fall, befall, happen.
fallen, befallen, happened.
falslier, more falsely.
fared, acted.
fareth, acts.
farne, fared, treated, conditioned.
fast, quickly, close.
fellows, companions.
fellowship, company.
fiendly, fiendish.
flang, drew out quickly.
flang out, drew out quickly.
fleet, float.
fleeting, floating.
flemed, put to flight.
foined, thrust.

for-bled, bled freely, lost a great deal of blood.
force; 'no f.,' no matter.
fordo, destroy.
fore-cast, pre-arranged, deliberate.
for-jousted, worn out by jousting.
forthinketh; 'it f. me,' I am sorry.
froward, from.
fulfilled, filled full.

garnished, furnished.
gerfalcon, a kind of falcon.
glasting, barking.
God would, would to God.
gree, prize.
greese, grease.
grisliest, most terrible.
guerdonless, without reward.

halp, did help.
handfast, betrothed.
happed, chanced.
harboured, sheltered, lodged.
hard; 'in like h.,' in the same hard way.
harder, stronger, more mature.
hardiness, hardihood, valour.
hardy, bold.
harness, armour.
harnessed, armed.
haunt, practise.
haut, high.
heartly, heartfelt.
heavier, sadder.
heavy, sad.
——, sadden.
hete, command, promise, word.
hight, was called.
hilled, covered.
holpen, helped.
hough bone, the back part of the knee-joint.
houselled, shrived, given absolution.
hoved, tarried.
hoveth, tarries.
hoving, hovering.
howbeit, although.
hurtled, clashed, dashed against.
hurtling, clashing.

in, on.
inly, intensely, deeply-dyed.
intent, intention.

japed, jested.
japer, jester.
japes, jests, jeers.
japing, jesting.
jeopard, put in jeopardy.
jesseraunce, cuirass of mail.
jousts, encounter on horseback, joust.

keep; 'take k.,' take heed.
kind, nature.

largess, bounty.
late, lately.
lay, song.
——, lodged.
led, was led by.
leeches, physicians.
let, hinder, prevent.
——, hindered, prevented.
lewd, unlearned, ignorant.
lief, gladly, willingly.
liefer, more gladly.
liefest, most gladly, rather.
life; 'led their l.,' spent their time.
lift, lifted.
lightly, quickly.
list, desire, inclination.
longed, belonged.

makeless, peerless.
maker, author, writer.
maugre, in spite of.
maugre their heads, in spite of their wishes.
maugre thy head, despite thy wishes.
meagre, thin.
mean, means.
medled, mingled, mixed.
meiny, retinue.
mickle, much.
minever, a kind of greyish fur.
mischief, harm, injure.
mischieved, injured.
miscomfort, discomfort, dismay.
misdone, done amiss.
mocks, mockings.
mortality, slaughter.
most, greatest.
mote, may.
mountenance, amount, space, duration.

naked, unarmed.
namely, especially.
ne, not.
near, nearly, almost.
neysshe, soft, tender.
nill, will not.
nis, is not.
noblesse, nobility.
nobley, splendour.
noise, rumour, fame.
noised, rumoured.
nold, would not.
nilt, wilt not.

obeissance, sway, dominion.
or, ere.
ordained, arranged, appointed, ordered.
ordinance, order, array.
orgulité, pride.
ought, owed.
outcept, except.
outher, or.
outrageousness, excessive violence.
out-take, except.
out-taken, excepting.
overget, overtake.
overlong, the length of.
overthwart, across.
owed, owned.
oweth, owns, possesses.
own, one.

paramours, lovingly.
part, duty.
parties, sides.
party, side.
pass, surpass.
passed, passed judgment.
——, surpassed.
passing, surpassing, exceedingly.
paynim, heathen.
pelowres, robbers.
pensel, penon.
peradventure, perhaps.
percloos, partition.
peron, tombstone, monument.
pieces, points.
pight, pitched.
play, recreate, pass the time.
pleasaunce, pleasure.
pointling, aiming at somebody.
port, door.
pounte, pont, bridge.
pricking, spurring.
purvey, provide.

quarrels, darts.
quest, search.
questing, chasing, barking.
quite, requite.

raced, *rased*, cut.
rashed, *rased*, slashed, cut (particularly applied to the stroke given by a boar).
readily, easily.
rechate, the calling back of the hounds.
recommend, commend.
recommendation, commendation.
recommended, commended.
recommending, commending.
recompensation, compensation.
rehearse, relate, enumerate.
rejoice, enjoy.
remembered himself, reminded himself, remembered.
repenteth; 'me r.,' I regret, I am sorry.
required, entreated.
resemblaunt, semblance, appearance.
right, just.
rights, necessities, points.
roted, practised, skilled.
rout, company.
rove, tore.

sacring, taking of the sacrament.
samite, a rich silk stuff, often interwoven with gold or silver threads.
Sangreal, Holy Grail.
scathes, injuries.
semblaunt, semblance.
sendel, a fine cloth.
set, beset.
——, appoint.
sewe, follow.
shenship, shame, disgrace.
shrew, wicked person.
shriven, confessed, do penance.
sidelong, sideways.
siege, seat, place.
siker, sure.
sin, since.
sith, since.
sithen, since.
smite, strike.
solemnity, festivity.
spere, inquire.
sperhawk, sparrowhawk.
spicery, spices.
sprang, spread.
stint, ceased.
stonied, stunned.
stout, strong.
strain, race.
strake, to give a quick blow.
stuff, victual, garrison.
subtil, clever, deft.

tale, reckoning.
talent, desire.
tare, tore.
there, where.
thereas, where.
thrall, thraldom.
thrang, pressed forward.
threated, menaced.
till, to.
to-brast, broke to pieces.
to-drive, to be urged along, hasten to ruin.
tokening, token.
took, gave.
took keep, took note.
traced, *trased*, checked, harassed (a hunting term for checking the dogs when too forward).
traitorlier, more treacherously.
traitorly, treacherously.
trappours, trappings.
traversed, ran across.

truage, tribute.
trussed, packed, bundled.

underne, the time from nine to twelve o'clock in the morning; meal-time.
unhilled, uncovered.
unmeasurably, immeasurably.
unnethe, scarcely.
unto, until.
unwarly, unwarily.
unwimpled, unveiled, uncovered.
up-so-down, up-side-down.
utterance; 'to the u.,' *à l'outrance*, to the utmost, to the last.

varlets, servants.
venery, hunting.
ventails, holes for letting in air.
very, true.
voice, vote.

wallop, gallop.
ware, aware.
watched, kept awake.
weenest, dost think.
weld, hold, possess.
welded, possessed.
weltered, rolled about, grovelled.
whether, which of the two.
wight, brave, valiant.
will, wish.
wimpled, veiled.
wise, manner.
wist, knew.
wit, know.
wite, blame.
with, by.
withsay, gainsay.
wittily, cleverly.
witting, knowledge.
wont, accustomed, used.
won up, struggled up.
wood, mad.
worship, honour.
worshipfully and manly, in an honourable and manly way.
wot, know.
wrothe, wrenched.

yede, went.
yode, went.
yolden, yielded.
y-wis, certainly.

END OF VOL. III.

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LE MORTE DARTHUR

BOOK X

Palomides rescues King Mark

HAPTER XX. How it was told Sir auncelot that Dagonet chased King Mark, d how a knight overthrew him and six ights. Now turn we again. When Sir anis and Sir Brandiles with his fellows came the court of King Arthur they told the ng, Sir Launcelot, and Sir Tristram, how Sir agonet, the fool, chased King Mark through forest, and how the strong knight smote m down all seven with one spear. There s great laughing and japing at King Mark l at Sir Dagonet. But all these knights ld not tell what knight it was that rescued ng Mark. Then they asked King Mark that he knew him, and he answered and d: He named himself the knight that followed questing beast, and on that name he sent of my varlets to a place where was his ther; and when she heard from whence came she made passing great dole, and covered to my varlet his name, and said: , my dear son, Sir Palomides, why wilt u not see me? And therefore, sir, said ng Mark, it is to understand his name is Palomides, a noble knight. Then were these seven knights glad that they knew name. Now turn we again, for on the

Dinadan rides to Arthur's court

morn they took their horses, both Sir Lamora Palomides, and Dinadan, with their squires a varlets, till they saw a fair castle that sto on a mountain well closed, and thither th rode; and there they found a knight that hig Galahalt, that was lord of that castle, and the they had great cheer and were well eased. S Dinadan, said Sir Lamorak, what will ye d Oh sir, said Dinadan, I will to-morrow to t court of King Arthur. By my head, said S Palomides, I will not ride these three da for I am sore hurt, and much have I bl and therefore I will repose me here. Tr said Sir Lamorak, and I will abide here w you; and when ye ride, then will I ride, unl that ye tarry over long, then will I take r horse. Therefore I pray you, Sir Dinada abide and ride with us. Faithfully, said Din dan, I will not abide, for I have such a tal to see Sir Tristram that I may not abide lo from him. Ah, Dinadan, said Sir Palomid now do I understand that ye love my mor enemy, and therefore how should I trust yo Well, said Dinadan, I love my lord Sir Tri ram, above all other, and him will I serve a do honour. So shall I, said Sir Lamora in all that may lie in my power. So on t morn Sir Dinadan rode unto the court of Ki Arthur; and by the way as he rode he s where stood an errant knight, and made h ready for to joust. Not so, said Dinadan, I have no will to joust. With me shall joust, said the knight, or that ye pass this w Whether ask ye jousts, by love or by hat

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